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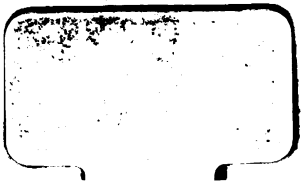

# NARRATIVE

OF THE RESIDENCE

OF THE

# PERSIAN PRINCES IN LON

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

# NARRATIVE

## OF THE RESIDENCE

OF THE

# PERSIAN PRINCES IN LONDON,

IN 1835 AND 1836.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR

## JOURNEY FROM PERSIA,

AND SUBSEQUENT ADVENTURES.


BY JAMES BAILLIE FRASER, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN KHORASAN," "THE KUZZILBASH," "THE PERSIAN ADVENTURER," &c.


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# PREFACE.

FEW words are necessary to explain the object of the following pages. The author conceived that some account of the residence in England of the first Persian—in truth, the first *Asiatic* Princes, who ever visited this country—was due to the British public whose guests these Princes were; and especially to that portion of it who took so lively an interest in their history and their fate. And on whom could the task of giving it fall, but on him who was intrusted with the charge of providing for their comfort while here, and of escorting them hence, on their return to the asylum they had chosen?

In executing this task he has kept two objects in view; the first, to give, in plain and simple language, the *truth*, and nothing but the truth

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—to exhibit his Royal charges in their real characters, and to explain, as well as he could, their feelings at all they saw, or heard, or experienced in this country; the second, to avoid as much as possible fatiguing his readers by the never-ending repetition of question and answer, and sentiments and compliments, which the incidents and engagements of every day gave rise to, without slurring over facts or expressions calculated to promote his primary object This, he can assure his readers, was no easy matter; for want of language on their part, in debarring them from free intercourse with others, prevented alike the utterance of many of those originalities of thought which give zest to the conversation of interesting strangers, and the occurrence of those whimsical mistakes and absurd coincidences, which sometimes may really happen, but are more often wittily imagined for persons in their circumstances; so that, in fact, their life and conversation were marked by more of monotony than excitement.

With this short explanation he commits the work to the decision of the public, the only true judges in such cases, who, where there is little pretension, are not apt to be severe, and who, on the present occasion, will not, it is hoped, think it necessary to "break a fly upon the wheel."

LONDON,
Jan. 24, 1838.

# NARRATIVE OF THE

# PERSIAN PRINCES IN LONDON.

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DEAR——, London, 1836.

I DO not wonder that you are amused at the new and singular duty which has lately fallen to my share; and, as it is very natural that you should wish to hear all about it, and to know who my charges really are, it will give me much pleasure to introduce you to these royal personages,—for such, and no less, by birth and parentage they are. But in order that you may understand the nature of their present situation, and their motive for embarking in an undertaking so extraordinary in the eyes of a Persian and a Prince, as that of a journey to England, I must commence by giving you a slight sketch of the political condition of the country which they have been forced to abandon.

Futeh Allee Shah, the late king of Persia, had, as you are aware, the largest family of children perhaps that ever was born to man. What number of wives he had is a point on which curiosity cannot, I fear, be satisfied; for not only were they subject to death like other women, in which case the vacancies were speedily replaced, but his majesty was in the habit of making frequent changes in the rose-garden of his harem, occasionally weeding out those flowers which withered or lost their loveliness, and not seldom bestowing such superannuated fair ones as marks of his especial regard upon certain of his favourite officers, who were forced to pay pretty handsomely for the faded sweets. Those ladies who brought him sons he seldom abandoned or lost sight of. The moment it was known that any of his wives had become the mother of a male infant, a superior establishment was immediately allotted to her, and she entered at once into the enjoyment of a weight and influence which was denied to those who had the ill luck to produce only children of their own sex. But the king's passion was variety, and, as he made a rule of

marrying after a fashion every female to whom he took a fancy, you may conceive that the number of his wives amounted to a pretty high figure.

There are, as perhaps you may have heard, two sorts of Mahometan marriages. Of the wives espoused after the first of these fashions, and who are called *Ahdee*, men are limited to four, and with these the contract is for life, unless dissolved by a regular and formal divorce. Those wedded after the second form are called *Mootah*, and with them the contract endures for any period agreed upon between the parties,—years, months, weeks, days, or even hours,—after the lapse of which they may separate, or renew the union, just as they think fit. Of these Mootahs the number is unrestricted, nor is the connexion considered at all disreputable; all the parties have to do, in order to preserve respectability, is to adhere to their contract while it lasts.

In the families of great men, who can maintain many wives, this description of marriage is resorted to as the means of increasing their harem, and their chance of legitimate progeny;

and thus many of their favourite sons are born of their Mootah wives. The greater number of the children of Futeh Allee Shah were necessarily born of mothers so circumstanced; and it is affirmed that, of wives of both classes, he generally maintained in his harem from eight hundred to one thousand. Even at the time of his death the number it contained is said to have been between seven and eight hundred.

Of this goodly collection were born to him, first and last, from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty sons, and about a hundred and fifty daughters; a fair progeny, which, inheriting all the procreative zeal and ambition of their august sire, and being early indulged with the means of gratifying them, the royal race increased with such prodigious rapidity, that at the time of his majesty's death, had his descendants been all gathered together, he would have seen, it is said, a tribe of full five thousand souls, men, women, and children, clustering around his throne.

Such singular fœcundity, however desirable in patriarchal ages, when men were wanted to increase the strength of a wandering tribe,

proved anything but a blessing either to the sire or to the country of this numerous offspring. The latter years of the former were disturbed and embittered by the quarrels of his sons, by their profligacy, and their more than questionable loyalty; while the country was eaten up, and the people impoverished, by their rapacious profusion. Each province, every considerable district and town, nay almost every village of more than ordinary size, had its "Shahzadeh," or Prince, with his court on a greater or less scale, oppressing his handful of miserable Ryots, till at length so completely did these royal leeches exhaust the resources of the kingdom, that very little, comparatively speaking, of its lawful revenues reached the Shah's treasury.

But this was not all. The crown of Persia has at all times been the property of the sharpest sword and strongest arm; and each of these petty kings, conceiving himself the fittest to succeed his father or grandfather, sought by all possible means, however flagitious, to strengthen himself for the struggle which all contemplated at the death of the reigning sovereign, so that

the seeds of innumerable and interminable civil wars were sown throughout the land.

To provide, so far as human foresight might avail, against a result so ruinous upon the king's demise, his majesty, who claims the privilege of naming his successor, however little that nomination may be respected after his death, was prevailed upon to declare his second, but noblest-born son, Abbâs Meerza, as heir to his crown and kingdom; and the principal powers in alliance with his majesty not only acknowledged this choice, but declared that they would support the will of their august ally, so far as might be in their power.

This disposition was unfortunately rendered void by the death of Abbâs Meerza; but his majesty was again prevailed upon to nominate Mahomed Meerza, eldest son of the deceased heir apparent, in the room of his father, as successor to the throne; and this new choice was in like manner recognised and guaranteed by both Great Britain and Russia. Unfortunately for themselves, however, neither the uncles nor cousins of the intended heir, that is, the sons and grandsons of the Shah, would nor did acqui-

esce in the decision of their sovereign and father. On the contrary, they openly declared that they never would bow the head to a boy; and each, avowing his intentions to strike for the throne, collected his resources and prepared his strength for the impending conflict.

Accordingly, when Futeh Allee Shah resigned his crown and life in October 1835, a variety of competitors started for the former. Among them however, besides Mahomed Meerza, the legitimate heir, three alone were at all formidable. These were, first, the *Zil-e-Sultaun*, full brother to the late Abbâs Meerza, and consequently full uncle to the heir apparent: secondly, Hoossein Allee Meerza, the Firmaun Firmaee, or Governor General of the important province of Fars: and thirdly, Hassan Allee Meerza, full brother of the last, who had once been governor of Khorasan, and afterwards of Kerman, from which he had been expelled for misconduct by the late Abbâs Meerza, with the Shah's permission.

The Zil-e-Sultaun was a man deficient in every requisite for command, and formidable only from being governor of the ark or citadel of Tehran, in which were deposited the treasures

of the sovereign. Hoossein Allee Meerza was powerful from being in possession of the resources of Fars, which province commands the whole south of Persia; but he was a man of weak intellect and irresolute mind, and his family had moreover rendered themselves obnoxious to many of the nobles of the province by acts of oppression and tyranny. The three princes now in England, and whom I shall presently describe to you, are the sons of this same Hoossein Allee Meerza.

His brother, Hassan Allee Meerza, was a man of more ability and strength of mind; and the popularity which he had acquired throughout a large part of the kingdom by a reputation for liberality and courage, would have rendered him the most dangerous rival of all to the legitimate heir, had not these advantages been neutralized by an imprudence and rashness which lost him the confidence of his father, and reduced him to a sort of dependence upon his brother the Firmaun Firmaee. His superior boldness and decision of character, however, enabled him to exercise a powerful influence over his brother; and, in opposing the claims of Mahomed Meerza, they acted in perfect co-operation.

When the last-named prince, who ought now to be called Mahomed Shah, supported by the solid aid of England, and the countenance of Russia, marched from Tabreez towards Tehran, the weak pretenders, who had for a moment affected a show of royalty in their own little domains, began to discover their error, and, as Khans and nobles came rallying round the sovereign, whom they saw it was in vain to oppose, these also, one by one, sought to secure indulgence by a timely submission. The Zil-e-Sultaun, however, who had crowned himself in the capital by the title of Allee Shah, still held out, and lavished money from the treasury to raise troops and secure the fidelity of his followers.

On the advance of his nephew, he sent him a letter, conceived in sufficiently arrogant terms, setting forth, that it had been the will of God to place the crown of Persia upon his head; and, as the kingdom could only endure one monarch, he summoned Mahomed Meerza, as his nephew and subject, to come to the presence, and tender his homage, and, in return, to accept from the royal favour the government of his deceased

father, namely, the province of Azerbijan. This letter was followed up by an army led by Imaum Verdee Meerza, another son of the late king. But the result was very different from the expectations of its master, for the troops, dismayed at the imposing appearance of the Azerbijan force, led on by its English officers, and enjoying the countenance of the English and Russian missions, and probably at heart not over warm in the cause of their employer, deserted to join the royal standard, in such numbers that their leader Imaum Verdee Meerza himself was fain to follow their example, and, repairing to the presence of the young king, to sue for pardon. In fact, the march of the royal army from Casveen to the capital was a triumphal progress. Opposition had disappeared; and the unfortunate Zil-e-Sultaun, unable either to fight or flee, was forced to surrender at discretion.

But the discomfiture of other aspirants did not by any means so intimidate the ruler of Fars and his ambitious brother as to induce them to withdraw their opposition. On the contrary, the Firmaun Firmaee, who had been in attendance upon his father at Ispahan until

a few days before the old man's decease, on his return to Sherauz, had himself crowned by the title of Hoossein Shah, assumed the ensigns of royalty, and began to levy troops with all his might to support his pretensions. He was supported in this rebellious course by the Ameen-u-Dowlut, chief minister of the late king, who on this occasion certainly betrayed his trust, and acted an unprincipled as well as a dishonest and imprudent part, knowing, as he did, the will of his deceased master, and how that will would surely be supported.

The consequence of this conduct on the part of the Ameen-u-Dowlut, together with that of a celebrated religious character Hadjee Seyed Mahomed Baukher, the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and head of the priesthood in Ispahan, was as disastrous as possible to that city. Deserted by the authorities that ought to have maintained good order, the *Looties*, that is, the "swell mob," the great concourse of vagabonds and thieves who are to be found in abundance in every large Persian city, as well as in those of other countries, commenced a systematic course of plunder, in which they were aided and abetted by

the above-mentioned Sheikh-ul-Islam, who, though enjoying a reputation for sanctity which rendered him all-powerful at Ispahan, and a most dangerous opponent to any reigning monarch, was at heart not only a most ambitious, but a thoroughly unprincipled person. He was the receiver of the lion's share of the stolen goods; and the thieves under his protection made their chief depôt for plunder in the principal mosque, where they enjoyed a perfect security. So complete was the rule of anarchy and outrage in this once great capital of Persia, that all safety of person and of property was at an end; houses were forcibly entered, and women and goods carried off openly by these wretches, much as in a town given up to plunder, so that all honest men that could do so fled from the scene of confusion and crime.

To rescue the city from this deplorable condition was a matter not less important than to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Firmaun Firmaee, who, according to information received from Fars, had despatched an army headed by his brother Hassan Allee Meerza, and five or six of his sons and other princes, to

seize upon the place. This service was confided by the young Shah to the care of Sir Henry Bethune Lindsay, who, as you are aware, had been sent out about a twelvemonth before, to assist in re-organizing the army, particularly the artillery of the Shah, and who had borne a very conspicuous part in the military transactions which had secured the throne to Mahomed Shah.

Sir Henry marched from Tehran in February, at the head of not more than four thousand men, of whom some five hundred were cavalry, and with fourteen guns. On reaching a village on the low road between seventy and eighty miles distant from Ispahan, it was confidently reported that the army of the Firmaun Firmaee had advanced within a few days' journey of that city; upon which, with characteristic promptitude, he made a forced march, which in about thirty hours brought him to the outskirts of the place; a performance with infantry almost, if not wholly, unprecedented, and which reflects equal credit on the troops for their willingness and powers of endurance, as on the zeal and decision of their commander. At his approach the Loo-

ties and plunderers disappeared, order was instantly restored, and Ispahan was saved.

Scarcely, however, had Sir Henry and his little army reposed for a few days in the rescued city, when authentic information was received of the near approach of the army of Fars. Fully aware of the importance of promptitude, he determined on an immediate movement, without waiting for the succours which were promised him; and disregarding the entreaties of those who would have fain persuaded him to wait, if but for a single day, until even one more regiment should arrive, he beat his drums at once, and in an hour after was in full march towards Komaishah, in the neighbourhood of which place it was supposed the enemy would be found.

It appeared, however, that the troops of Fars, which consisted chiefly of cavalry, desirous to avoid a collision with the royal army, and in hopes of being able to surprise the city, had taken a road leading further among the mountains than that which Sir Henry had chosen, which was the usual high-road. On learning this, by a rapid and clever manœuvre, he led

his troops across the dry bed of a river, and, cutting off their route, met them face to face not far from the village of Isferaeen.

Hassan Allee Meerza, who, it appears, commanded in person, thus forced to fight or flee, took the former part, and divided his cavalry into five *dustehs*, or bodies, so placed as to support one another. His *serbâz*, or regular infantry, amounting only to about eight hundred men, he posted behind an old garden wall, in order to check by their fire the advance of the king's troops as they should move forwards to the attack. But Sir Henry was a better tactician than they dreamt of, and, instead of marching up so as to be shot at coolly from behind a wall, he halted his artillery, reinforced by six guns from Ispahan, at a convenient distance, and, opening its fire upon the said wall, knocked it down in a trice, together with a good many of the poor serbauz behind it. The cavalry, startled by the fate of the regular infantry, made but a faint show of resistance; and, on receiving a few rounds from the well-served guns, they fled, and scattered all over the country; and so complete was the rout, that it is said their

commander, Hassan Allee Meerza, together with his brother and nephew, princes, could scarcely muster fifty horsemen to attend them in their flight. The serbauz were all made prisoners, and the camp equipage with the whole of the baggage taken; and had Sir H. Bethune possessed more cavalry, the slaughter, if not the rout, would have been much greater, for there was no want of will to slay; as it was, the killed on the part of the enemy did not, I believe, exceed a hundred men, while of the Shah's troops there were only a few wounded.

Sir Henry, intent to profit by his victory, pursued his way at once towards Sheerauz, followed by the *Moatimud-u-Dowlut*, Manoocheher Khan, a Georgian eunuch in great favour with the late king, who had been appointed to take the command in Fars, and who had entered Ispahan on his way thither, with a considerable army, after Sir Henry had left it. It appears that the efforts of the Firmaun Firmaee had been very much paralyzed by the defeat of his troops near Komaishah, and that not only were his own resources inadequate to meet the strug-

gle he had rushed into, but that his influence with the powerful chiefs of his country, who might have aided him effectually, was at too low an ebb to admit of much reliance being placed on their assistance. It was only a short time before, that he had caused Mahomed Allee Khan, a nobleman who from his influence among the wandering tribes had been created *Eel-Khânee*, or Lord of the Eeleauts, to be seized and imprisoned; and, although life and limb were spared, the Khan was not released until he had disbursed large sums of money; after which, "à la mode de Perse," they gave him a dress of honour, and sent him back to his country and his tribes again. But though those who have been outraged by a king or prince may, while he continues powerful and prosperous, conceal the wounds inflicted on their pride, it is not to be imagined that these wounds do not rankle in secret; nor that, should opportunity occur, the injured parties will be slow to wreak their vengeance on the oppressor. The Eel-Khânee, summoned to Sheerauz on this occasion, with his contingent of troops, came indeed, and entered the city;

but it was not to aid its distressed prince; it was to watch his time, and to betray the man who had injured him so deeply.

Another misfortune for the Firmaun Firmaee was, that even the *serbauz*, or regular infantry, which he possessed, were deprived at this critical period of their only efficient leader. They had been drilled and commanded by a British officer, who had once been similarly employed by the celebrated Daood Pashah of Baghdad. This person, who had for some time been suffering from illness, died just before the march of the Fars troops against Ispahan. It was whispered that he had been put out of the way by order of the Firmaun Firmaee, in consequence of a refusal to march in command of troops that were intended to act against the cause supported by his own country and government: but this I do not believe; for whether he did or did not refuse to march against Mahomed Shah, the state of disease under which he had long been labouring, and which had been exacerbated, if not entirely induced, by his own unfortunate habits, was sufficient to account for

the fact of his death, without imputing to his employers the needless guilt of murder.

While the Firmaun Firmaee was thus preparing for so important a struggle, he summoned round him as a matter of course all his sons, and those relatives on whom he thought he could most confidently rely. Among these were the three princes now in England, Reza Koolee Meerza, Nejeff Koolee Meerza, and Timour Meerza. Of these, Reza Koolee Meerza, his eldest son, born of his first and most esteemed wife, is the principal in dignity, as in years. Far excelling his weak father in ability and discretion, the executive administration of the province was chiefly vested in him. In the words he has more than once made use of to me himself in speaking of this subject, "The title was with my father—the rule with me." He is now about thirty-two years of age, tall, and of a very pleasing countenance; a man of very amiable dispositions, gentlemanly feelings and manners; a great deal of innate dignity of character, which evinces itself in his general deportment and conduct, and a shrinking and almost morbid

sensitiveness to all that, in his opinion, may tend to affect his good name, or lessen him in public estimation; in fact, a repugnance to public exposure of any sort. The title bestowed by the late Shah upon this prince, for almost all of them have such titles, was that of *Naib-ool-Moolk*, Lieutenant or Vice-Governor of the country.

Nejeff Koolee Meerza, the second in years of the three, being born of a Georgian lady, who was of course a slave, is in that respect inferior in rank to his elder brother, but takes precedence of the younger, though more nobly born, Timour Meerza, probably by courtesy and tacit consent. He had been made governor too, at an early age, of the distant and important district of Bebahan, or Koh-e-Geeloo, an office of trust, which increased his personal consequence, and for which, according to the fashion of Persian governors, his natural abilities appear to qualify him well. He is of a small and slender person: his light hair, blue eyes, and peculiar features announce his Georgian blood; while the disadvantage of extreme short-sightedness, and the long beard which, unlike his brothers, he

cherishes with care, unite with a natural shyness of disposition to render his appearance and address less agreeable than those of his brothers, and tinge them with an awkward uncouthness. In truth, his manners are less gentle than those of his elder brother, and want the open frankness of those of the younger; and a rough deep voice increases the unfavourable impression which a first introduction may sometimes produce. Yet this ungainly exterior covers more talent and learning than is possessed by either of the others; the *Wali*, for such is this prince's title, which signifies *Prince*, or Chief, is shrewd and intelligent, well versed in the learning and accomplishments of his own country, a keen observer, an acute reasoner, with a decidedly intriguing and diplomatic turn, and a general force of character which has given great weight to his opinion with his brothers. The Wali is always set forward as the negotiator, where such is required; and, though the greatest deference is paid to the orders and wishes of the elder prince, I have observed that he never comes to any decision on matters of consequence without consulting the Wali. Yet this force of

mind is mingled in a very curious manner with a simplicity which appears wholly at variance with the rest of his character; and I frequently remarked a timidity and irresolution in some things, generally trifles, amounting even to childishness, which was wholly irreconcileable with the natural vigour, I had almost said relentlessness, which often marked his character. For the rest, he is one of those strict religionists who affect a little of the dervish, or ascetic; although, judging from his unrestrained enjoyment of the good things of this world at times, his philosophy does not appear to have produced a very regulating effect on his conduct. Taciturn and morose as he might appear to strangers, he enjoyed himself much in private society, and there was none who loved their joke or their bon-môt to season a good glass of wine more than the Wali. I have seen him uproarious in his mirth, and, what might appear still less in keeping with his character, melted occasionally into very sincere fits of sensibility.

The third, Timour Meerza, is very different from both his brothers. He is by the same mother as the eldest, but five or six years

younger; that is, from twenty-six to twenty-eight years of age. Tall and slender, yet muscular and perfectly well made, his carriage and deportment declare at once his character, which is that of a fearless, reckless, joyous young soldier, caring little for anything that has not reference to hunting or to arms, or social and not very temperate enjoyment. Horses, dogs, hawks, guns, swords, and pistols are his passion; to which may be added,—no uncommon thing in youth,—a warm admiration of female beauty, and delight in parties of pleasure and those feasts where the wine-cup circulates freely. He is just the creature to echo from his heart the characteristic wish of the *yerremmâses*, or reckless dare-alls of his country, who declare that all they desire in this world is a good horse, a sharp sword, a "cypress waist," and a stoop of wine. Yet this reckless exterior covers excellent natural endowments and dispositions, which a better education, for he appears to have been a spoiled child from his youth, would have turned to very valuable account. He is blessed with a fine temper, and a high and buoyant spirit, which, though sometimes break-

ing out into a momentary blaze of passion, renders him a cheerful animated companion, and supports not only himself, but his brothers, under their really severe reverse of fortune, and in the still more vexatious and trying, because constantly pressing, annoyances and ennui of every-day life. No one who has seen Timour Meerza in conversation can have failed to remark the beaming sunshine of his countenance, and the striking animation of his manner. His very attitudes and movements are indicative of the bold yet kindly frankness and proud independence which are the striking features of his character. Timour Meerza obtained from his grandfather the title of *Hissâm-u-Dowlut*, or the Sword of the State, which characteristic sobriquet was bestowed by the Shah upon occasion of an equally characteristic feat on the part of the prince; and, as it will serve better than any thing to give you an idea of the man, I will relate it to you here.

When Timour was but seventeen years of age, he attended the late Shah on a hunting party among the ruins of Shahpore, an ancient

city in the south of Persia, now a howling wilderness, overrun with jungle, and abounding in all sorts of game and wild animals, lions and tigers among the rest. It so happened that one of the former animals, having been started, took shelter in a thick covert, from whence beaters were sent to drive him, whilst the Shah and most of the princes awaited his appearance without, to shoot him as he should pass. Timour Meerza, however, was too much excited to remain inactive, — he dashed into the jungle with the beaters; and the consequence was, that the lion sprung out upon him, one claw fastening upon the flank of his horse and another on his own thigh, tearing them both in a desperate manner. But the young man, instead of being dismayed, with equal coolness and promptitude turned round in his saddle, and, bringing his gun to bear upon the beast, fired with such effect that it fell to the ground; on which, dismounting with equal rapidity, he cut off its head with his sword, and laid it, dripping like himself with blood, at the feet of the Shah. Soon after this he was made governor of Bushire and

the Dushtistan, a tract upon the Persian gulf, where his conduct was strongly marked by all the extremes of his character; and there he became intimate with the English resident, and several other gentlemen of this country.

## LETTER II.

THE princes described in my last letter were but a small part of the royal Kajar race, who were at this time collected at Sheerauz to support the Firmaun Firmaee and his brother: for the former prince had many other sons; and not a few of his brothers, sons of the late Shah, took part in the struggle which their elder was engaged in against his nephew. This struggle was terminated sooner than the most desponding prognosticator could have predicted, loose and inefficient though the materials of the rebel party were. No sooner had the troops of Mahomed Shah, under Sir Henry Bethune, appeared before Sheerauz, and surrounded the place, than the Eel-Khânee with all his followers, who were calculated upon as its chief defenders, declared for the king, and co-operated with the enemy outside; a fact which became known to the princes within, who were occupied with preparations for defence, by their

suddenly discovering that the gates and principal points of the city were in possession of that chief's troops.

Nothing can more clearly mark the utter incapacity of those who had so rashly engaged in this dangerous enterprise, than the childish imbecility with which they appear to have fallen into this dilemma, and their total inability even to attempt escaping from it. In fact, their discomfiture would seem to have been the effect of infatuation rather than ignorance; for some of the party profess to have been on their guard, and to have raised the voice of warning in time, but all in vain. The eldest prince assured me that, long before the arrival of the Shah's army, he had urged his father not to coop himself up in the city, but to move out into some position from whence he might command his other resources, and remove again, or even fly, if necessary. But his advice was rejected, and particularly by his uncle Hassan Allee Meerza, who declared that the king's troops would never be able to make an impression upon Sheerauz; that he doubted if they would even try it; and, on the contrary, felt satisfied that, if they should

make their appearance at all, it would rather be as friends than as enemies, and willing to come to a good understanding upon fair terms: "And what could I urge," said the prince to me, "against the advice of my uncle and my elder? — yet I did remonstrate till my father got angry, and told me to hold my peace."

How Hassan Allee Meerza could permit himself to become the sport of an illusion which his own previous defeat should have dispelled, I know not; but such the prince declared to me was the case; and, unfortunately for himself, the Firmaun Firmaee was so far misled as to follow this evil counsel. The consequence was, that, hostilities without the walls being aided by treason within, the unlucky governor of Fars was taken by surprise, and knew not what to do. At the critical moment when the full extent of their misfortune was discovered, six of his sons, accompanied by certain of his brothers, repaired to the private apartments in the palace, where he was seated in helpless perplexity, and besought him to lose not a moment in flying: "Horses," they said, "and servants were in waiting." The Firmaun Firmaee, still irreso-

lute, sent them off to discover whether any of the gates were yet unoccupied by his enemies. The princes, armed and mounted as they were, departed immediately on this service, and separated into parties in order to multiply the chances of success. Reza Koolee Meerza, Timour Meerza, and their younger brother Iskunder Meerza, with a few followers, kept together. The first gate they came to was already in the hands of the Eel-Khânee's people; they galloped to another; a party were just in the act of securing it; but the man who was shutting-to the interior door was shot by the pistol of Timour Meerza before he could effect his purpose. Another, in the act of discharging his musket at Timour, was cut down by his brother Iskunder. The ball, fortunately, was arrested by three thick flaps of bread which "the Sword of the State" had caught up when leaving home, as a provision in case of accidents, and they saved his life; but one of them was displaced and fell, a loss which he sadly deplored in the sequel.

The other princes now came opportunely up, with some servants, and the gate was secured for the time. Not a moment was then lost by

Reza-Koolee Meerza in sending off his *meerachor*, or master of the stables, with a capital led-horse to his father, and an earnest request that he should mount immediately, and join them while yet he could do so. The harness of this horse was of gold, and worth a thousand tomauns, (500*l.*) and there were a thousand tomauns in gold bound upon his croupe, all of which would have been useful in case of flight; but the man got killed on the way, and horse and all were taken by the enemy. Another horse and messenger were despatched on the same errand, and still they struggled to maintain their post in hopes of their father's appearance; but at length, being overwhelmed by numbers, they were forced to give way, and, dashing forwards from the gateway, cut their way through the enemy outside, and made off at full speed to the hills, pursued by some hundreds of horsemen. The town soon fell into the hands of the king's troops; and the Firmaun Firmaee, with his brother Hassan Allee Meerza, and a number of other princes, his brothers, sons, or nephews, being made prisoners by the Eel-Khânee, were by him delivered into the hands of Sir Henry Bethune. That officer, as in duty bound, sent them all to

Tehran, to be dealt with according to the will and pleasure of their royal relative: but his majesty, with a leniency rare on such occasions in Persia, contented himself with sending them all unharmed to the state-prison at Ardebeel, except Hassan Allee Meerza; and he, being considered a peculiarly dangerous and obnoxious person, was blinded when within a few days' journey of the capital. The Firmaun Firmaee, however, never reached his destined place of confinement: worn out probably with fatigue and anxiety, his frame was unable to resist an attack of cholera morbus, which seized him on the road to Azerbijân, and which terminated his misfortunes and his life together.

The fugitive princes, being six brothers, made off, as I have said, for the hills, pursued by their enemies; but they were mounted on first-rate horses, and by degrees outstripped their pursuers; so that, before evening fell, they had reached the *Koh-e-berf*, or mountain of snow, one of their favourite hunting-grounds, and so called from the quantity of snow which lies there during the greater part of the year. Their knowledge of the ground here enabled them easily

to baffle all pursuit, and to reach a cavern among the snow in the higher parts of the mountain, where they knew themselves to be secure from future search; but it was a bitter cold night in the month of February, and they were without cloaks or coverings, or even food for themselves, nor had they a grain of corn for their horses.

The night wore away, however; but being unwilling to remain longer than necessary so near the very focus of danger, in the morning, after a minute examination of the country with their spying-glasses, they mounted and made their way among the mountains towards the celebrated *Kallah Suffeed*, or "White fortress," the abode of Mahomed Wullee Khan, chief of the Mammasenni Eeleauts; a tribe of the aboriginal inhabitants of these parts notorious for being the greatest robbers in that country of thieves and plunderers.

Perhaps you may not be aware that plundering is a profession which is held as anything rather than disgraceful among these, or, indeed, among any of the Eeleauts or nomade tribes of Persia; that is, not more so than it was by our

own ancestors of old, who, when accused of being thieves and robbers, repelled the charge with indignation, declaring that they troubled no man, but only drove their "spreach" in "the land of Moray, where every gentleman takes his pleasure." Wullee Khan, then, was just such a gentleman "reiver;" but he was moreover a chief of so much note and power, that his daughter had been thought a fit match for Timour Meerza, whose wife she had become, and thus it was natural enough that the fugitive princes should bend their way to his tents.

After a journey of two days and nights, which they made amongst the mountains, suffering much from cold and hunger, they reached his encampment at the foot of the Kallah Suffeed. There is an excellent story regarding the supposed conduct of Wullee Khan to his royal connexions and guests, which, somehow or other, has got into circulation here. It sets forth, that in defiance of the laws of hospitality, so highly regarded among the tribes, and of what was due to friends and connexions in distress, that chief stripped them of the little

property they had carried off; and that, when they remonstrated against this inhospitable outrage, and appealed to his feelings as a relative, who should rather supply their wants and protect them from harm, than rob them of the pittance they had preserved, he declared what they had stated to be the strongest possible argument for the conduct they blamed:—"It is," said he, "the very reason, my good friends, why you should be pleased at what I have done. You know that somebody must needs have the stripping of you before you reach the coast; now, would you not prefer that the property should remain in the family,—that a friend and relative should profit by it?"

The only objection to this story is, that it is not true; for, having heard it, I made a point of asking the prince whether such had been the case or not.—"Anything but that," was his royal highness's reply; "Wullee Khan received us most hospitably. When we came riding up to his tent, he was taken by surprise, and, not knowing who we were or what we wanted, snatched down his gun and his sword to defend himself in case of attack. But I waved my

hand to him and said, 'No, no, Khan, be at rest,—all that work is at an end; we come to you as fugitives and guests, not as enemies. Our state, and power of offence, are all gone alike. Here is my sword,—here are my brothers'; we have nothing but our horses and their harness, besides the clothes on our back,—take them if you please, for we cannot resist. We are perishing with cold and hunger,—do with us what you will.'

"At these words," continued the prince, "the Khan started and tore his beard, while his eyes filled with tears. 'Dust on my head!' cried he, 'what words are these?—for what do you take me? Am I a man to rob my guests and strip my own relations? On the contrary, all I have is yours;' and then he embraced us, and took us into his tent; and fed and clothed us, for our clothes were hanging in tatters; and he offered us all manner of assistance, and treated us suitably to our birth and rank. No, no, Wullee Khan is not the *ghorumsaug* (dirty scoundrel) to rob the guests who take refuge in his tent!"

Nevertheless, it appears that, even in the case

of relatives, these Mammasennis and their chief are ticklish folk to deal with, as came out in further conversation on this very subject. "After all," said Timour Meerza, in reply to some observation of mine, "this same Wullee Khan clothed and entertained us on easy terms; for it was the very bed-clothes of my own sister, and the habiliments of her attendants, that supplied our wants in his own tents."—"And how was that?" I inquired.—"Why," replied he, "a party had been sent by the Khan to escort a caravan which was returning from Kerbelah to Sheerauz, beyond the mountains, which they did accordingly: but, having performed this duty, they thought they might as well do a little business more in their own way, before returning home; so, after parting with the caravan, they just made a small detour, and galloping forwards waylaid it at a pass, and, stripping the people, left them to pursue their way as they best might. It chanced that my sister and her party were with this caravan; so, while we were passing on one side of Khoneh Zenioon, the Mammasennis were robbing the *Zea-ul-Sultunat* (his sister, the "beam of the

Empire") on the other; and, just as we reached the camp of Wullee Khan, they had brought in the plunder which served for our accommodation."

From Wullee Khan the prince received a party of some five hundred horsemen, with whom he despatched Timour Meerza back towards the neighbourhood of Sheerauz, in order to distract the attention of the king's troops and plunder the country, so as to delay the departure of his father and family with the rest of the captives, if possible, until something more effectual could be done for their liberation. Messengers were also despatched to warn the tribes of Buchtiari and Louristan to muster their forces and join his royal highness. But the Firmaun Firmaee, in reply to the letters of his sons, informing him of the steps they were taking, and the hopes they entertained of being able to retrieve his affairs, wrote them a letter which I wish it was in my power to give you at length. It contained more good sense and feeling than I imagined could have existed in the whole crasis of that prince.

It made allusion to his former palmy state, in contrast with his present fallen circumstances,

and cautioned his sons from permitting themselves to be dazzled by false hopes, which could only lead them into deeper ruin. "If I," said he, "when possessed of all Fars and its resources, a numerous army, a large treasury, and all the means and appliances of royalty which, as you know, were so lately mine, was unable to secure the throne, can you imagine that there is the smallest chance of success for you with a few hundreds, or even thousands, of needy adventurers, unprovided with money, arms, or any warlike stores, to achieve the object which I have failed in obtaining? No; it is plainly not the will of God that the kingdom should be ours, and it becomes us to submit to his omnipotent decrees. Besides, the first news of your commencing such a course as you propose, would be the signal for my death. If you will consent to be guided by me, there are just two lines of conduct for you to pursue; choose between them. If, like me, you are weary of the world, and can submit to sacrifice its pleasures and vanities, retire to Kerbelah or Najeff-Ashruff, and there lead holy and religious lives, praying for me and for yourselves. If, on

the other hand, you cannot bring yourselves to this humble and pious frame of mind, and if you have hearts bold enough to make the effort, repair to England, throw yourselves on the generosity of its sovereign, and, with your hands upon his skirt, implore his protection and assistance. The English have always been my friends, they are powerful and generous, and your appeal to them will not be made in vain."

The prince, after mature consideration, resolved to pursue the course advised by his father in this letter, which he regarded then, and still regards, as his *wussiyut-nameh*, or last will and testament; and such, indeed, it might well be held, as it was the last communication his son ever received from him. Prince Timour was recalled, and reluctantly returned to his brother at the Kallah Suffeed. But it does not appear that all warlike demonstrations were as yet completely laid aside, for the prince proceeded towards the Bebahan district to demand succours and assistance of the governor, a person who had been placed there by himself during a temporary disgrace of the Wali. But gratitude

does not appear to have been the distinguishing trait of this man's character, for he replied to the application by a message, deprecating all personal communication, accompanied by some comparatively trifling presents, which the prince indignantly returned with a letter of bitter upbraiding.

A few days after the prince's arrival at the camp of Wullee Khan, he was joined by his mother, who having made her escape from Sheerauz, in the confusion consequent on its capture, along with Solymaun Meerza, another son of the late king's, and a single servant, had followed the traces of her sons till she reached the Kallah Suffeed. From thence, when the prince, her son, quitted the camp of the Mammasenni chief and proceeded towards Bebahan, this spirited lady accompanied his party, sharing all its hardships, and exhibiting to them a signal example of courage and perseverance. From Bebahan it was resolved to make the best of their way towards the country of the Chaab Arabs, which lies on the north side of the Persian gulf towards its head, and on the mouths of the rivers that flow into it. But to reach the

low country was by no means an easy matter, for, as they advanced, they found it all in the hands of their pursuers, so that they were forced to abandon the roads and inhabited districts, and skulk from hill to hill in order to avoid captivity. In this long and devious course the hardships they endured were very great; for food frequently failed them, and they were often obliged to be content with the very precarious supplies of game which skill in the chase enabled them to procure.

At length, after encountering and conquering a thousand difficulties, they made their way to the banks of the river Zeidoon, which enters the gulf at Endian, and is the boundary of the Chaab country to the south-east. It was swelled to a prodigious size by the melting of the snow in the hills, and bridge there was none to be seen; so that, however great their desire to place this important obstacle between themselves and their pursuers, to pass appeared impossible; the very attempt was out of question. They made inquiries of a countryman regarding the means of crossing at other points; and the peasant engaged to conduct them to a prac-

ticable ford at some distance higher up, as no bridge existed.

On reaching the ford, they found the river one wide and roaring sea of turbid water, boiling furiously along. They were smitten with despair. To attempt to cross, was as much as life was worth ; to remain where they were until the waters should subside, was to run the imminent hazard of being taken. Hungry and exhausted, however, they resolved, in spite of the danger and louring weather, to lie down upon the bank and rest awhile ; and, having set their guide to watch upon a neighbouring hillock, they dismounted, and stretched themselves to sleep.

Scarcely had they closed their eyes, however, when the prince was roused by the sentinel, who told him that he had seen horsemen descending from the high grounds at some distance. He rose with a start, and soon became aware of a numerous body of horsemen who were approaching, and who, there could be no doubt, were their pursuers. Awakening the rest of the party, they got ready the horses, eyed the foaming waters, and then gazed at the

horsemen, who were approaching with all the speed their weary animals could make. The case might now be called a choice of deaths; but fear of falling alive into the hands of their foes, and being delivered over to the charge of the furoshes, not to mention the tender mercies of their cousin king, prevailed over the terror of the flood. They bound their mother on her horse, tying her feet under its belly, placed a bandage over her eyes that she might not be made giddy by looking on the whirling waters, and two of them taking hold of her reins, they all plunged into the torrent. Desperate was the struggle, and far—far down were they driven; but, by the mercy of God, they all got safe through, and their pursuers came up in time only to see them land in safety on the opposite side, and retire into the country, whither their zeal was not hot enough to induce them to follow.

The fugitives were now secure, though far from human abode, and unprovided with food either for themselves or their horses. Their resting-place for the night was in a date-tree grove; and the next day they reached the Arab tents, where, though the accommodations and

means of sustenance were most homely, they were freely bestowed and enjoyed in peace. In fact, the most pressing part of their troubles and difficulties ceased from this point, and they proceeded without further molestation towards Felahi, the residence of the Chaab Sheikh.

On their way they were met by a certain Meer, a relative of the chief, with a large gathering of the Arabs; and were received at Felahi by Sheikh Saumeed himself with all possible respect and hospitality. Offers of more substantial assistance were likewise pressed upon them, with a view to the recovery of their country and rank; and assurances given that the Arab force to be placed at their command would be joined by many a Lour and Buchtiari chief with his followers. Nor was this a mere vain or empty proffer; for in Persia there is never wanting abundance of discontented chiefs of greater or less power, who are ready to rise in arms against the ruling prince, whoever he may be, and to take part with any adventurer whose enterprise may afford hope of promoting their own ambitious views, or gratifying a restless spirit. Among

these, the chiefs of the Lour and Buchtiari tribes have at all times been foremost to display either their predatory or their turbulent propensities: and to these may be added the Chaab Sheikhs themselves, through whose country scarcely can a caravan make its way with any hope of safety; and who, had the princes been in power, would now, as they often had done before, have resisted their authority.

Tempting as these offers might be, however, the elder prince resisted them all, as he had done those of his friends Wullee Khan, and the chiefs of the *Serhud*, or upper country; and, after a stay of some time with Sheikh Saumeed, he took boat at Felahi, and crossed the Shût-ul-Arab to Bussora.

His royal highness Reza Kolee Meerza takes no small credit to himself for his firm resistance of so many tempting offers, in which a sanguine mind might have contemplated the certainty of restoration to power and wealth, and for pursuing unswervingly the path pointed out by his father and approved of by his own good sense; nor can the praise of discretion and forbearance be fairly denied him. "I might have

mustered as many adventurers as I chose," he has often observed to me, "and kept the whole of Fars in commotion. Who was there that knew the country better than my brothers and myself? Every hill and pass were familiar to us. I might have ravaged the country from one end to the other, and baffled all pursuit for years. Incalculable is the evil I might have done to Mahomed Shah, as you well know. I might have ruined half his kingdom ; but all this I have forborne to do. I have chosen a less destructive course,—a course which I hope will meet the approval of those whom alone I am now desirous to please, whose countenance and protection I desire to secure, and who will not, *inshallah !* permit my family to be insulted and destroyed, nor yet to perish for want."

From Bussora the party made their way along the course of the Euphrates, partly by land and partly by water, to Najeff-Ashruff, a city built in the Desert, at some distance from the right bank of that river. It contains the sepulchre of Allee, son-in-law of Mahomed, and is therefore held particularly sacred by the Persians, who are Sheahs, or of the sect of

Allee. Their adventures from Bussora to this city of refuge were confined principally to repelling attempts at pillage made upon them by the Arabs, Montefics, and others, through whose territories they passed. Having reached it, they lived there for some time in peace; but at length accounts, exaggerated as I believe, having come to their ears, of the evil treatment inflicted on the princes their relations, and even on their own families who had fallen into the Shah's hands, they resolved to delay no longer putting into execution the enterprise suggested by their father, of proceeding to solicit aid and protection from England; a resolution which was quickened by the tidings of his death.

In the month of October they repaired to Baghdad, in order to take counsel with the English resident there concerning the best mode of proceeding. They were received by Colonel Taylor with even more than his usual hospitality and kindness. Their case as princes in distress was of itself sufficient to excite sympathy; but there were some circumstances connected with the early history of a part of Colonel Taylor's family which rendered the

meeting of these princes and their mother in his house peculiarly affecting; for the lady of that gentleman had in her younger days been indebted to this princess for much kindness. And well, according to the testimony of the princes themselves, did she acquit herself of the obligation; they talk of her unwearied efforts to render them comfortable and happy with grateful enthusiasm.

At Baghdad they resided, as I believe, about three months, until the proper season for travelling came on; when, finding that the direct route through the Desert to Damascus or Aleppo would be too dangerous to attempt with a small party, they gave out that they intended to go the Hadj to Mecca, and the assembling of a caravan for this purpose was accordingly announced, in order to secure a sufficient force for putting their design into execution.

## LETTER III.

To the practised and adventurous travellers of Europe, a journey like that which was now to be undertaken by these princes would present nothing formidable; and, unable to appreciate the effort of mental energy and resolution which must have been exerted by them to overcome their indefinable alarms, and determine them to commence it, they will naturally smile at a terror which appears as unaccountable as unmanly. But the fact is, that few Persians ever travel out of their own country, excepting merchants, or persons who, from motives of piety, are induced to make the pilgrimage to Mecca or Kerbelah,—a religious duty enjoined for once in their lives upon all good Mahometans. But *Feringistan*—Europe—is a world as distant almost, and as difficult of access, in the imagination of a Persian, as the moon

might appear to us. Few have ever attempted to reach it; and the accounts given, by those who have returned, of the difficulties to be encountered on the way, and of the utter discrepancy between the manners and customs of Europe and those of the East, have tended strongly to allay the warmth of curiosity which has been excited by their narrative of its wonders. Then the idea of a residence among Kaffers,—infidels,—where there are neither mosques nor moollahs, shocks their superstitious, if not religious feelings; and all, combined with the oriental indolence of their nation, co-operate to widen the terrible gulf that in their imagination divides Persia from Europe. Again, there is the sea, the deep wide sea, with all its dangers and horrors, that has to be encountered per force; and your Persians are true hydrophobists where the ocean is concerned. Take all these considerations together, allow for inexperience and prejudices, and then judge of the effort of resolution which it must have cost these three young men, nursed in all the luxury and independence of royalty, to undertake, alone and almost without attendants,

a journey, including several thousand miles of a sea voyage, to so distant a country as England.

In course of time a caravan was formed; but as it consisted chiefly of women and pilgrims, with a proportion of merchants, amounting in all to many hundred persons, for the most part quite unprepared for resistance, our princes engaged as guide and guard a Sheikh of the Agail tribe of Arabs, Mahomed Towengiree by name, who took with him by way of defenders about a hundred men, most of them on foot and only armed with spears. There were but few horsemen of the party; and even the princes adopted the country mode of riding in Kajawahs, or baskets, hung across the back of a camel, having their horses led unmounted. Of the whole party of fugitives who came to Najeff from Sheerauz, three of the brothers remained there with their mother; Solymaun Meerza, their uncle, with certain others of the late king's sons who joined them there, resolved to try their fortune in other quarters; while the three who are the subject of these epistles, thus pursued their way to the shores of England.

Their journey to Damascus occupied, by their

own account, about fifty days; during which they took an immense circuit to avoid encountering the roving and predatory Arabs, and frequently through mistakes of their guides they went astray in the waste. As an instance in proof of this, they told me that a cooking vessel, which had been lóst at one of their nightly resting-places, had been found by them several days after, in consequence of their having unconsciously wandered back to the same ground. But the monotony of their way was occasionally cheered by the occurrence of such adventures as the desert is apt to give birth to. One day, as they journeyed along, the caravan was alarmed by the sight of several spear-heads appearing above the horizon; nor was their terror diminished by the speedy approach of some fifty or a hundred Arabs who carried them. A halt ensued, and much confusion. The guide, Mahomed Towengiree, appeared as much alarmed as any one; and no idea of offering the slightest resistance to any demand that might be made seemed to be for a moment entertained.

After some tumultuous consultation, the princes said to each other, "What! are these

scoundrels to be suffered to rob us in this sort of way without our making a single effort to protect ourselves? In the name of God, let us show a front, at all events, and try what we can do to get good terms." So, quitting their camels, they took to their horses, and by much persuasion induced those who were similarly provided to do the same; so that, what with horses and yaboos, they managed to produce a troop of riders not far inferior in numbers to that which was advancing to meet them.

A pause and a halt now took place, each party eyeing the other with menacing gestures as if to try the strength of their respective courage. "We must do something to frighten these fellows," said Timour Meerza at length to his brother. "We must not let them come too near, or they will find out how weak we are." While he was yet speaking, an Arab mounted on a fine white horse dashed forward some hundred yards in front of his friends, and, planting his spear in the ground, began to vociferate with wild and threatening gestures. It was the challenge customary on such occasions, when the Arabs wish to try each other's strength

and boldness before coming to blows; and Timour, burning for action, his gun already loaded and slung over his shoulder, sprung forth to meet him. Soon they neared each other; but, instead of closing, they took to manœuvring, the Arab with his spear, and Timour with his sword. A short while having made the latter aware of the extent of his adversary's skill and force, he turned and made off as if in flight towards the caravan; the Arab followed eagerly, secure of victory, when Timour, permitting him to come up within a couple of spear lengths, turned round in his saddle and fired, not at the rider, for that would have made the matter a blood-feud, which was to be avoided, but at the horse, which he hit in the shoulder, and down came man and beast, rolling on the ground.

There was a shout and a forward movement of the Arabs, which was checked by a show of advance on the part of the riders of the caravan; and Timour dismounting proceeded to help up his fallen antagonist, and, as he did so, said, "Do you see now we are stronger than you? I could have killed you as easily as I hit

your horse, but we don't want to make enemies of you. Say what is it that you and your people want?" A parley ensued. The Arabs insisted upon receiving a large sum of money as the price of permission for the caravan to pass free and unmolested. The prince and leaders of the caravan, emboldened by the success of their champion, declared that they would give no such thing; that, on the contrary, they were the stronger party; and that it rested with them to make minced meat of the Arabs. "We have a hundred *Toffuuchees* (musketeers) with us," said they, "and you see we know how to use our arms; therefore, so far from giving you anything, we declare that unless you provide the caravan with a supply of provisions for this night, you and your camp shall smart for it. We shall pay you honestly and well, but the food for man and horse must be produced." And so successfully did they bully the would-be robbers, that, as the princes affirm, they actually did supply the required provisions, and were glad to conciliate their powerful opponents with considerable presents,

*It* is not often that the roving Arab *catches such a Tartar* in his own deserts.

They did not, however, always escape as well. When within but a few days' march of Damascus, the caravan fell in with a large body of the Aneiza Arabs, well armed and mounted, who surrounded them and demanded a large ransom. "There is nothing for it here but to submit," said Mahomed Towengiree. "We must make the best terms we can, and pay with a good grace." Accordingly, after much detention and a long negotiation, a sum agreed upon was produced in money and goods, and the caravan was permitted to proceed to its destination.

They reached Damascus in February, and were hospitably received and entertained there by Mr. Farren, the British consul, to whose house they immediately went, as the authority of the power to which they looked for future support. At Damascus they remained for forty days, until the road over Mount Lebanon to the coast was open; after which, it being agreed that they should proceed to England by the

Malta steam-packet, they went to Beyroot, accompanied by Mr. Farren's chief dragoman, Assad Khayat, a Syrian of Greek descent, an excellent linguist, who, though still young, could speak English, French, and Italian, besides Greek, Latin, Arabic, and some other oriental languages, and who was to serve both on the way and during their stay in England as interpreter to their royal highnesses. At Beyroot they embarked on board of his Majesty's steamer Africaine, in which they reached Malta. There, after performing quarantine, they were transhipped on board the Spitfire packet, and in due time were landed at Falmouth.

During these two voyages they suffered extremely from sea-sickness, in spite of the great attention and kindness which were paid them by the respective commanders, of both of whom they talk in high terms. They declared to me, that, from the time of their embarkation until that of their coming to anchor at the termination of each voyage, they never held up their heads nor came on deck, and that the only intervals of ease they enjoyed were during the customary calls of the vessels at Gibraltar and

at Cadiz. The governor of the former fortress treated them in the most hospitable manner. They stayed at his house, and he gave a ball for their entertainment, at which, for the first time in their lives, they beheld an assembly of females unveiled, dressed out in the European fashion, and dancing with persons of the other sex; a matter which, as you may suppose, astonished not a little men who hold such an accomplishment as belonging to, and fit only for, professional dancers, who are considered as women of no character.

At this place they also had, for the first time, an opportunity of seeing a considerable body of regular troops drawn up under arms, and performing the field exercise and military manœuvres of a review with all the exquisite precision that belongs to European discipline and tactics; for the governor, with that attentive consideration for the amusement of his distinguished guests which actuated all his conduct, appears to have ordered a review of all the troops in garrison for that purpose. All, in fact, which they witnessed at Gibraltar, appears to have conveyed to them a strong impression of the

power of Great Britain, and the courteous kindness of its authorities and officers.

At Cadiz they only remained a few hours, during which they were received by his Majesty's consul there, but had no time to see much of the place. The only remark I remember hearing from them was respecting the size and magnificence of the cathedral, which appeared to have made a considerable impression on the mind of Timour Meerza. But I am not acquainted with many particulars of their voyage from thence to Falmouth, from whence, after a stay of two or three days, they repaired by one of the public coaches to Bath. To this place they seem to have been directed very much by chance. They had inquired whether there was not some city near to London where they might remain in private until they should learn the terms on which they were likely to be received by the English government; and having become wearied of the coach, at Bath, and finding there a good hotel and treatment, they resolved to set up their rest in such comfortable quarters until their future movements should be determined by tidings from London.

Accordingly, in order to feel their way, the elder prince sent his brother Nejeff Koolee Meerza, the Wali, accompanied by Assad Khayat the interpreter, to London, with a letter to his Majesty's principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, acquainting his lordship with the arrival of his brothers and himself, and of their desire to throw themselves upon the hospitality and protection of Great Britain, and requesting his lordship's directions respecting their future proceedings.—I take this opportunity of apprising you, that for the future, in speaking of these royal personages, I shall make use of the term *Prince* to the elder, Reza Koolee Meerza, alone. The second, Nejeff Koolee Meerza, I shall generally designate by his title of *Wali;* while the third and youngest shall retain his own proper name of Timour Meerza.

The Wali and his companion arrived in town, I think, upon the 27th of May; and took up their abode for the time at Long's Hotel, from whence they forwarded their letters to the Foreign Office. The appeal which they thus made was of a very novel description, and calculated to place his Majesty's government in a

position of some delicacy. To treat at all with men who, whatever might be their personal claims or merits, could be considered in no other light than that of rebels against their lawful sovereign, and that sovereign our ally, might have been embarrassing: but no doubt could exist in the breasts of Englishmen, or in the councils of an English government, as to the imperative cogency of receiving with courtesy and hospitality strangers and princes, with whom many of our countrymen, British officers and travellers, had lived in amicable intercourse; whose protection and good-will they had profited by; and who had made a journey of many thousand miles, and encountered many dangers, to solicit a return of these good offices; and who were, moreover, the first natives of central Asia of any considerable rank who had ever given such a proof of confidence in Great Britain.

The fact is, that Asiatic notions of hospitality have at all times been far more extended than ours. In the days of Arabian greatness, when the character of that nation was higher than it now is, if a guest arrived, the last camel would

have been killed for his entertainment, the last loaf would have been set before him, even if the children of the host must thereby have been deprived of food. An Arab host, on many occasions when his guest was in want, has divided his substance with him; and there are instances on record of such hosts actually impoverishing themselves to vindicate their claim to a liberal hospitality, by enriching their guests.

When a chief or a prince in distress took refuge at the house of a noble or the court of a king, it would have been an eternal and indelible disgrace not to have received the fugitive with alacrity, and provided for his maintenance in a manner suitable to his rank for as long as his necessities or inclination might require him to remain. We have all read in Eastern story, and even in Eastern history, of kings placing armies at the disposal of distressed and fugitive princes, in order that they might recover their lost dominions. Thus Abbas the Second gave to Hoomayoon, Emperor of India, a force with which he quelled his rebellious nobles, and reseated himself upon the throne of Dehlee.

It is true that the kings and nobles of the

East, fallen themselves from their former high estate, and distressed in pecuniary means, have departed in great measure from this magnificence and high-toned hospitality; but the remembrance of it remains, and continues in idea to be an attribute of all rich and powerful states. It is not then wonderful that the well-known riches and liberality of Great Britain should gain her credit with Orientals for a full share of Eastern hospitality. In fact, even in the late Shah's reign, a show of this high-esteemed virtue was maintained in Persia. Whenever a stranger of rank arrived in Persia, he was considered as the guest of the crown. The governor or prince of the district appointed him a lodging and a mehmandar, and it was understood that he was to be maintained at the expense of government. The required provisions (called *soorsaut*), which were procured for him and his suite from each village as he came along, were nominally allowed to them in account when paying their yearly taxes; so that, had the theory and practice of this regulation agreed, the traveller would in fact have been *bonâ fide* the royal guest.

But such was far from being the case. A mehmandar was indeed provided,—a hungry noble, or retainer of some prince whose object it was to wring what he could from the peasantry under the name of soorsaut for the guest, and to obtain from that guest the largest possible present. In general, of late the attempt to enforce the furnishing of soorsaut has been resisted by the peasantry; supplies have been scanty or bad at the best; and so distressing to any mind of common good feeling was the whole process, that it was usual for strangers to reject the soorsaut, and to obtain what they required by paying for it fairly.

Still the feeling exists; and even now in Persia you would hear of the number of kings, and princes, and persons of exalted rank, who have been or are entertained as royal guests. When I was at Mushed in Khorasan, there were half a dozen princes starving in this way,—eking out, by the sale of the remnant of their effects, the miserable pittance which reached them of their soorsaut, after the peculation of governors and men in office; and I have often heard *Persia,* and Mushed in particular, called "the

Asylum of fugitive Princes." Above all, the rights of sanctuary are sacred. "*Dakheel-e-tu ustum*," "I have taken refuge with you," is a plea which no one could or would resist; and to betray or abandon a *Dakheel* would be to incur eternal ignominy.

Thus, in every view of the case, whether judging by their rules or our own feelings, there could be no doubt as to the course to be taken with regard to these royal though unfortunate personages. But, unhappily, their hopes were too highly pitched to be satisfied by common hospitality and kindness. Born and educated as princes, they forgot, or probably felt not, that their father, though a prince, the son of a king, was nothing more, in point of fact, than the governor of a province, removable at his sovereign's pleasure, and who could only preserve his situation by a deference and duty which neither he nor they had ever fully paid; and that, so far from having any inherent or hereditary claims on the province which they had been exhausting and misgoverning, the old king at the time of his death was actually on his way

to call their father to account for large arrears and malversation of revenue.

Nevertheless, it is certain that they did entertain hopes that the British government would interfere to secure to them the possession of, and, in fact, a sort of sovereignty in, the province of Fars; that the same power, in short, which had been so mainly instrumental in placing their cousin, Mahomed Shah, upon the throne, would interfere with his free agency so far as to insist upon his making over, to those who had disputed the succession with him by force of arms, one of the finest provinces of his kingdom; that is, not only to dissever from it almost a fourth of the whole, but thereby to afford to his avowed enemies the power of making future encroachment, and fostering constant rebellions in the rest.

It was a lucky thing for all concerned, and especially for the princes themselves, that the Wali arrived in London one day before our friend M. left it. He had conceived the probability of these young men entertaining some such notion in their heads, and he very judi-

ciously thought it would be a charitable act to them to point out the folly of cherishing for a moment the hope that it could be accomplished. The clear and forcible manner in which he elucidates every thing he takes in hand to explain, not less than his perfect knowledge of the language and circumstances of the country, enabled him to do this in a manner that soon brought down the poor Wali's towering pretensions, and put him in a frame of mind calculated to consider anything that might be hereafter granted to them as a boon. In fact, in dealing with Persians it must always be held in view that they constantly pitch their tone and demands as high as possible at first; not in the hope of getting all they ask, but of thereby securing more than they could obtain by more modest pretensions and direct demands at first. Thus it is quite possible that they never expected to succeed in their original extravagant views; but only, by preferring these, to secure better terms in the end. This one interview, however, demolished such airy castles, and rendered all future dealings with them comparatively easy.

It was on the 29th of May, that, after shaking hands with our friend M., I went to call upon the Wali. I found him in a dark room upon the ground-floor at Long's Hotel, seated on a sofa which commanded a view of the window. I announced myself as a gentleman who had travelled in Persia, and who, hearing that a prince of that country had arrived, a stranger in London, and knowing something of the language, had done himself the honour of calling to pay his respects. As I entered, the Wali rose from his seat, until he stood *upon* the sofa, not beside it, thus presenting a somewhat grotesque appearance; and he welcomed me with the "*khoosh âmedeed*" of his country. We soon got into conversation, and he was cheered and gratified by hearing his native tongue, even though imperfectly spoken. The conversation, after compliments, was confined to questions and replies concerning his journey; for he was obliged to attend to an engagement, and I left him, promising to repeat my visit.

Two days after this, a proposition was made that I should take charge of the princes during their residence in England, procure them a

suitable establishment as guests of the British government, and make them as comfortable as possible. To this I at once agreed; and the more readily, that I felt really interested in men who had thus broken the ice of intercourse between central Asia and England by so spirited an enterprise, and knew by bitter experience the feeling of forlornness which is apt to oppress the minds of strangers at a distance from their country and their homes, even when perfectly supplied with the luxuries as well as the necessaries of life. What traveller in distant lands is there who has not felt the want of sympathy and social intercourse, or will not confess that a crust of bread, and a mouthful of water, partaken with a familiar friend, a dear companion, is worth all the feasts and hecatombs that wealth could set before him, unseasoned with the blessing of their presence?

I speedily waited on the prince to inform him of the charge which I had accepted; and in a few days I was enabled to take his royal highness to a most handsome and cheerful suite of apartments in Mivart's Hotel, Brook-street,

calculated for the accommodation of the whole party, consisting of the three princes, their interpreter, and three Persian servants; and where arrangements had been made for supplying them with every comfort on a very liberal scale.

## LETTER IV.

HITHERTO the Wali had not gone out at all, nor had he received any visitors. He awaited in his own apartments a reply to the letters of his elder brother, of which he was the bearer. But on Thursday the 9th of June, Sir R. I., who, you know, feels so deep an interest in all Oriental matters, called upon his royal highness. By his kind offices we obtained excellent places at a spectacle which, to an European, is probably one of the most striking and interesting that London affords,—the anniversary assembly of the charity children in St. Paul's cathedral; perhaps, to the untrained conceptions of an Oriental, its effect might be too confounding and overwhelming to be perfectly comprehensible.

On our way to the cathedral his attention was exceedingly attracted by the beauty of the

shops, but he was suffering somewhat too much from bewilderment to be susceptible of unmingled pleasure. He was much astonished at the immense size of the dray-horses; and not a little so at the crowd of carriages, and the prodigious bustle. What, indeed, can be conceived more stunning and confounding to an utter stranger, than a drive at this season from Brook-street, down Regent-street, and along the Strand, Fleet-street, and Ludgate-hill, with such an assembly and spectacle at the termination of it?

On entering the cathedral, where the prince was most courteously received and assisted by the authorities and officers in waiting, we were shown to the pew of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, next to that which had been prepared for the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria. The sight was most magnificent. The divisions of children in their various liveries rising in regular gradation, row above row, under the immense dome, and forming as it were a lining to its contour, resembled the calyx of some prodigious flower; while the floor beneath, covered with a crowd of beautifully dressed people,

looked like a richly variegated pavement to this great cup. In fact, the immense height of the dome was lost sight of in the spectacle that filled it.

The prince was gratified with the scene; but still more so when, on the commencement of the service, this prodigious concourse of little ones struck up at once the simple but most beautiful notes of the hundredth psalm. He said little; but it was obvious that he was deeply impressed with the whole solemnity. As the service proceeded, and the music of the choir arose in all its harmony, echoed by the full chorus of children, his attention continued powerfully arrested; but during the reading of the lessons and prayers I saw that it flagged. He had received a gracious acknowledgment from the Duchess of Kent and the Princess, the latter of whom, as the future queen of this country, he had expressed a strong desire to see. The full effect of the spectacle had been produced; and at the end of the second lesson I thought it more prudent to withdraw him, while the impression continued deep and favourable, than to fatigue him with the remainder of

a service which he could not comprehend. So, intimating this wish to one of the officers near us, way was immediately made, and we retreated by the passage which had been reserved for their Royal Highnesses the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria.

Some gentlemen kindly suggested our taking a bird's-eye view of the body of the cathedral from the organ, which was most strikingly grand; and, with this concluding *coup d'œil* to dwell upon, we took the prince away. But, in retreating, he failed not to bestow a few minutes' regard upon the monuments which we passed on our way to the door, especially on that of Admiral Collingwood; and he made some very pertinent remarks in reply to the explanations which his inquiries called forth.

On our way back, while passing through Ludgate-hill, I took him into Everington's shawl warehouse. He was much delighted with its splendour, and with the exquisite articles which were courteously brought forth to be shown to him; but he was most pleased by a curious arrangement of mirrors by which he saw his own figure seven or eight times reflected. Such

conceits are common in the houses of the great in Persia, and he understood the full merit of the contrivance in question. I was somewhat surprised to find him so indifferent a judge of the values of the various shawls; but this proceeded from the great difference that exists between the taste for those things in Persia and in Europe.

Proceeding homewards, his eye was caught by some wax busts in a hair-dresser's window; and this sight, which probably was quite novel to him, entirely threw him off his guard. Surprised out of that gravity and formal decorum which men of rank in Persia pique themselves upon maintaining, he started forward from his seat, and, pointing towards them, exclaimed with a loud voice, "*Een che cheezee-ust—Een che cheezee-ust?*—What are these? What are these?" I explained what they were, and he kept on the alert all the way home eagerly looking out for others, and always exclaiming as he saw them, "*Ajaib cheezee-ust!*—Wonderful things these!" I do think he was more tickled by these same wax dolls than by all he saw at St. Paul's.

After dinner, having secured a box at the Opera, I took him to see Lablache in the part of Marina Falieri, and Grisi in that of Ellena. He was much astonished and delighted, as you may well imagine, at the first *coup d'œil* of the house; and he confessed himself to be pleased with the singing of Grisi, although more gratified, I suspect, by her own appearance: but when Lablache came on the stage, and I pointed him out as one of our first-rate vocalists, and asked him what he thought of his performance, he replied, "*Ah! ee cheezee neest—ee poochust.*—Ah! he is nothing at all—he is not worth hearing:" then, pointing to Grisi, he continued, "*Oon khoob ust,*—She is the good one."

The opera went on heavily enough with him. He got interested a little, it is true, in the scene where the Duke is brought before the council, and taken off to be executed. "What are they going to do with him?" said he; "Ah, poor wretch! don't let them kill him." And he was somewhat interested in the parting scene between the Duke and Ellena, although it was not easy to make him comprehend the full gist of the drama. In fact, spite of an ice which

was brought him to quench his thirst, and which he pronounced to be an "*Ajaib cheez*,"—a wonderful (that is, excellent) thing,—it was no easy matter to induce him to stay for the ballet, which was Benyousky; and which, being brilliant and showy, I was desirous he should see. But the dancing, when it came, was a reward for all. My friend was perfectly ravished; and at last, after gloating over the glittering crowd, he broke out, "Well, I have been accustomed to see the Shah's dancing-women and all the harem let loose into the gardens in their richest dresses, so that I am used to a show of beautiful women; and it is well for me that I am so, for, *Wullah Billah!* were any one not so trained to see such a sight as this, it would drive him mad."

I was not a little surprised, however, at his insensibility to the splendid singing and to the music in general, for the Persians rather pique themselves upon being a musical people; but the interpreter, a shrewd man, to whom I mentioned my surprise, observed, that he did not at all wonder at it. "I," said he, "am better acquainted than he can be with your European

customs and practices, and, of course, have more than once heard European music; but I declare to you that our own music of Damascus is more to my taste. I am used to it, and like it; but this of England I don't understand, and consequently do not relish it."

On leaving the house, we had to stand in the crush-room and passage, waiting for our carriage, which could not for some time be found; and even when the servant did discover where it stood, we were forced to walk at least forty yards, as it could not drive up to the door. The prince was mightily discomposed at this. He had no idea of waiting, and still less of compromising his dignity so much as to walk; and in spite of my explaining to him that these were accidents to which all, whatsoever their rank, were exposed on a crowded opera night, he was out of humour all the way home. "Alas!" thought I, "poor prince! if you are so easily annoyed,—if your feelings of rank and dignity are still so sensitive,—I pity you: what a prospect is before you; what distress have you not inevitably to endure!"

Next day the prince was left alone in his

glory at Mivart's; for, having received from his Majesty's government a kind reply to the letters of his brother, and a gracious invitation for the whole party to repair to London, he despatched the interpreter Assad down to Bath, to intimate these good tidings, and to guide the two remaining princes to the metropolis. I believe, in fact, they were heartily tired of waiting at Bath, in spite of a great deal of kindness which they received, and which they have at all times been most ready to acknowledge. Figure to yourself the condition of these two princes and their two servants, without one word of the language, utter strangers in a city where not a soul knew a single word of theirs,—unable to express their wants, anxious and dispirited from the uncertainty of their own fate, and, from mere absence of employment or any means of amusement, disposed to brood over the past, and dwell with bitterness on all they had lost. No wonder, I think you will admit, that they were impatient for the return of their messenger; no wonder that the Wali was equally anxious to despatch this messenger of comfort to his lonely brothers.

On the 11th, however, previous to their arrival, desirous to procure my friend the Wali as much amusement as possible, I took him to the flower-show of the Horticultural Society in their gardens at Chiswick. It was a bleak and windy day, unfavourable for the appearance of the country or the gardens; yet the multitude of carriages, and the crowds of well-dressed ladies as we entered, struck him pretty forcibly. He walked upon the velvet turf, and went up to the rose-bushes, every flower and bud of which he touched and petted with his hands, and expressed considerable satisfaction. But this gradually abated as the sight grew familiar to him, and he discovered that there was no ultimate object in view, no grand show as in a theatre. It appeared, too, that the poor prince was very short-sighted, so that he could only make out the general effect of distant objects. We could not get close to the flower-stands, and he could distinguish nothing but a great gush of blossom. It so happened, too, that early in the day there were but few beautiful women in the garden; and as the gusts of wind freshened, threatening rain, he began to get

but he complained that many of them were no better than gay deceivers. "*Gool mizenund,*" said he, "they play me tricks (or, they are cheats); for, when my eye is attracted by a group of gay-looking persons clad all in beautiful colours, they approach, and lo! I find them all old and ugly."—"*Punah-bur-Khodah!*—God protect us!" exclaimed he, after awhile, as they came by in troops; too many, alas! having little claim to any other description. "God protect us! What women!—what dresses!—why can't they dress as becomes their age? But here comes one surely—ah! pooh! another cheat. Ah! there is another. No—not much worth neither—she is too white; she has no life; we don't like white beauties. Do you like those white and red curling locks, and those light eyes?" I replied that we esteemed fair beauties, and blue or grey eyes, very much, when united with suitable features. "Ah, well! we do not in Persia: deep black eyes for us, and the eyebrows like a pair of arches, with a fine rich colour. Now, there—there is one who has something of it—just a *leetle*. You must know that among us we distinguish

two kinds of beauty; one of which we value highly, and the other we admire but little. We call them *sebâhut* and *mallâhut*. The first consists in mere regularity of feature, fine eyes, a fine nose, a beautiful mouth, perhaps, but without life or expression; for this we have no great fancy. The other consists in that beauty of expression which may exist independent of form and features. The mouth may be ill-made, the nose a little awry, the eyes no great things, the chin not what it should be; and yet, in the whole face there may be a spirit and a zest, a something more taking than mere beauty of form, which catches the heart of man in spite of himself. This is what we value, what we covet. We say that such a face '*Namak dared*,' has *salt* (the term *mallâhut* comes from an Arabic word signifying salt). Now stay, I will show you one who has *namak*, and one that has none. Ah! there! look at that person; she has a little, not much: but there! look at that girl with the black eyebrows, they are a little like Persian ones; she now has *mallâhut*. But, *Punah-bur-Khodah!* how few there are with either. Stop! look at

the lady in the lilac dress: now she has what we call *sebâhut*, and you, perhaps, would call her beautiful." It was a fair and rather delicate girl, with very light hair and little colour; interesting, we should have said, and with tolerable pretensions to be called a pretty blonde. I told him so. "*Ah! heech musruff na dared.*—Ah! she is worth nothing as a beauty," said he; and so he went on, rattling away with a string of not very complimentary remarks on the ladies who flitted by, till at length the *Keif*, I suppose, subsiding, and with it his spirits, he repeated his desire to leave the gardens, and I immediately complied. He had assuredly enjoyed himself to a certain extent, but it was not at all according to his Persian notions; he wanted fellowship of feeling and boon companions. "Ah!" said he, as we were passing over the soft shaven grass, and saw the multitudes flitting past in incessant movement, "if this were Persia now, how differently would these people be employing themselves on this turf, which is like velvet, and among this gush of flowers and rich verdure! Not one spot, not a bush would there be without its party seated

in the shade, drinking their wine to the sound of instruments. Why can't these people sit still and take rest?" He was rather provoked at being so constantly stared at, but bore it well on the whole. On leaving the gardens, the whole road to London was so crowded with strings of carriages, that we could hardly get along. It was still but five o'clock, the most crowded hour of the show. He was astonished at their number, and asked if I thought there were many more left in London. I think he did not give much credit to my assertion, that, if we were driving through the streets at that very time, we should not miss them. What would he have said had he seen the multitudes of vehicles of all sorts and descriptions that filled every common and open spot, besides the public road, for near two miles below the gardens?

In the evening I accompanied the prince to dine with Sir R. I. where we met with Lord T. and several other pleasant people. Here he was very well off, being the almost sole object of attention; and his spirits did not droop, for he supported them very reasonably with wine.

I must do him the credit to say, however, that, though he partook very freely of every wine that was offered during the time of dinner, he stopped short of anything like intoxication; and when the bottle went round afterwards he passed it, saying, "No—*buss ust*—enough." In this and in all other particulars of *bienséance* his behaviour was perfectly unexceptionable; and to those who knew that Orientals in their own country always eat with their fingers unaided by the appliances of knives and forks, it was a subject of admiration to see how well he made use of these instruments. As the dishes were handed round, he made a point of tasting them all, as is the custom in Turkey, and, perhaps, from curiosity. When he found one to his taste, he ate the portion which he took; if not, he quietly sent it away without remark.

Sweetmeats being handed round at the dessert, he took with much relish some preserved ginger; observing, at the same time, that he did not know how it was, but that the English seemed to have a strong partiality for mingling bitters with their sweets. "Do you like bitter things?" said he. I replied, that certainly in

some preserves a degree of bitterness was considered as essential to excellence. "Ah no," observed he; "that I can never agree in. How can it be?" At this very moment a plate of fine preserved Malta oranges, a sweetmeat which it was thought he would like, was presented to him by the desire of Lady I.; and without once reflecting on the strong dislike he had just been expressing for bitter things, I cut and gave him a piece. He took a bit and began to chew it, when suddenly his face changed to an expression of blank dismay, like that of a child cheated into taking physic. "Eh! *Punah-bur-Khodah, een che cheezee ust.*—Good heaven, what is this?" mumbled he, with the water almost running from his mouth, for he dared not compress his lips, but sat staring for a good half-minute, uncertain, as it seemed, whether to swallow the unsavoury morsel or put it out. In fact, what became of it, or whether it ever found its way into his stomach, I do not know; but grimaces of more intense distress I never saw. "What is the matter, prince?" said I; "is that bitter too?"—"Bitter!" repeated he, with an accent of inexpressible disgust, "it is the

very father of bitterness. Did not I tell you that all you English were fond of bitter things, and that we Persians hate them?" I made an apology for the mistake, and we laughed, of course; but, though he took it very well, he steadily refused all the other sweetmeats which Lady I. kindly pressed upon him "to put the bitter taste out of his mouth." "No, no, lady," said he; "be *buxsheed,* excuse me; it is enough—no more!" On going up to the drawing-room I asked him whether he would have coffee or tea; and if the former, whether he chose it with sugar, after the European fashion, or bitter, after that of the East. He replied in Persian, that he would have no coffee, but tea; adding in broken English, and laughing heartily, "No, no, not more bitter, bitter enough."

He was a good deal interested by looking over some prints of Eastern subjects, particularly those in Morier's Travels. He was quite delighted with the Persian concert. "*Wah wah,*" said he, "*che khoob kesheedust,*—how capitally that is done! I know them all. There is so-and-so, and so-and-so;" naming every one of the performers, and pronouncing them to be excel-

lent likenesses. He laughed loud and long at the sketch of the Persian breakfast, declaring that he knew the people represented there also. "Wullah!" said he, "that is just the way old Hajee,—(such an one) hangs over the mujmooah when he's going to plunge his fist into the pillaw!" He was not so well pleased with the print of the Key-kâj exercise, and did not understand the position and attitude of the horse; for he said, "See! that horse must have been shot (goolah khoord ust)."

On the following day (Sunday), I took the Wali a ride through the Regent's Park, and towards Finchley, being desirous of showing him something of the richness of English country scenery. He was greatly struck with the beauty of the park, which was in most delicious verdure, and delighted with the gay crowds that filled it. The day was sweet and genial, and there were numbers of pretty and well-dressed women passing up and down. I pointed out many things which I thought would interest him, but he sat for awhile absorbed as if in thought. "Ah, well!" said he at last; "what a sad pity it is, after all, that men must die!"

"Ay, so it is, prince," replied I; "but you remember there is a heaven — a paradise to come."—"Ay," said he, "there is, and that is the consolation; there *is* another world. But, *wullah!* these places go far to make a man forget it."

When we cleared the town, and got out to more open ground, the Wali began to gaze about him with a renewed interest: "*Ah! che khoob jaee,*" said he, as we passed Primrose-hill, "what a fine place is this! This is something like, now; this reminds me of Persia. There, I would just wish to wander about or ride on that *sahra,*" meaning by that word a plain without trees or cultivation. But to the exquisite beauty of the country, with its sweet inclosures and wooded luxuriance, he paid but small attention; and in a little while he asked to drive home, giving as a reason that he expected his brothers to arrive from Bath. This they did in the evening; but, being weary with their journey, they went early to bed, and I deferred paying my respects to them until the following day.

## LETTER V.

On the following day after breakfast, I repaired to the hotel, where I found the whole three princes seated along with my friend Meerza I— of Hayleybury College, their countryman, though now a perfect Englishman in manners, language, and feeling, who, having heard of their arrival, had come to pay his respects, and do what might be in his power for their comfort in the stranger land.

I found the elder prince, Reza Koolee Meerza, a tall, comely, handsome-looking man, clad in the usual Persian kabba and cap, seated on his heels upon a sofa at the head of the room, from which he rose on the approach of a guest; a mode of salute which had something of the ludicrous in it. He welcomed me very courteously with the usual Persian expressions, and in a manner that bespoke the perfectly well-bred gen-

tleman. Timour, the youngest, was seated on a sofa, writing or drawing something with as perfect an air of nonchalance as if he had made no part of the company; nor did he acknowledge any one until introduced to him by his elder brother. His figure was one which could not fail of immediately attracting all who saw him. Tall, slender, and formed for activity, his carriage habitually erect and bold, yet free from the smallest approach to bravado, gave the most perfect idea of gallantry, courage, and lofty daring: his handsome countenance, when animated by conversation, beamed with vivacity and intelligence; and none could see the glance of his keen and varying eye without feeling that it could "melt in love" as well as kindle in war. In truth, Timour Meerza is one of those richly endowed creatures who, if born under happier stars, could not fail of running a brilliant career: for his fine form, his careless happy disposition, imperturbable good temper, and power of wit and conversation, would infallibly have made him a great favourite with society; while his skill and address in all athletic exercises, his military taste and talents, his shrewd judgment and general fine

abilities, would have as surely borne him forward in the more serious business of life. My friend the Wali, now only second in the play, sat silent and demure, only now and then making a quiet remark or replying to a question. More than one person called on them to-day; some, their acquaintances at Bath, and others who, having been in Persia, were desirous of giving them the comfort of hearing a few words in their own language: but they kept in the house, refusing to go out, according to the fashion of the East, after a journey.

Next day (the 14th) I took the party to see the flower-show at the Surrey Zoological Gardens, and went early to avoid too great a crowd. The garden was beautiful, and the princes could not avoid being struck with it; but they appeared more disposed to look at the animals than the flowers. Timour Meerza requested to be shown the hawks,—he meant those of the hunting species; and he was greatly disappointed at seeing but few, the majority being only the less noble varieties of the birds of prey. The lions pleased him better; and he urged the keepers frequently to rouse them, that he might see them

to advantage and in a rage. As to the bears, he turned up his nose at them. "Do you call these miserable things bears?" said he; "let them come to Fars, I will show them finer bears on every hill." On the whole they enjoyed the place more than they chose to confess, but not so much as I expected. They were amused at seeing some of the animals, which in Persia run wild, taken so much care of here, particularly some species of wild hogs. "Ah!" said Timour, "you cherish these creatures here, in Persia we only kill them: I have killed a hundred of them in one day on a hunting party." The elder prince was annoyed at the crowd of gazers; he could not find a spot to sit down upon in private *(khelwut)*, as he said; and after a short time they all asked to be taken home. In speaking of the lions, they admired one or two much; but the others they thought too small to have a place there. "Eh! I have killed a larger at Shahpore," said Timour, "and thought little of it."—"He says truth," observed the elder prince; and then he related the story of his killing the lion at Shahpore, which I have already told you.

A day or two after this, the princes made their debut in the world of fashion at an evening party at the Marchioness of S.'s. This, to the elder prince, who is of a very sensitive disposition in all that regards the usages of, and intercourse with, society, who feels his change of condition, and shrinks from anything like public exposure, was a trying occasion. He had been induced by some friend of the interpreter Assad, to go out on a previous evening to a large ball, at which he not only found himself a complete stranger, without the means of communication, but a gazing-stock for multitudes who had not a conception of what the party were, or, if they had, at least had little delicacy in the expression of their curiosity. Of this the prince complained to me, and desired to know whether the party to which he was this evening invited was such as that he had already seen. I assured him that he might not only be satisfied that he would find himself in one of the most distinguished societies that England could produce, but that he would meet with all possible consideration and attention. "Well," said he, "you are my guide,—I am in your hands; remember I am a stranger

in the ways of this country, and I trust to you to order matters so that neither shall I commit any impropriety, nor shall I be placed in a situation to suffer disrespect or insult." Of course, I replied that it should be my study to avoid anything of the sort, and in due time we repaired to the Marchioness's party.

It was an occasion at least as trying to me as to the prince, for I had yet to learn how these three young men could and would comport themselves in society. I knew that Persian noblemen *can* behave themselves, when they please, like perfect gentlemen; but I also know that some of their usages differ much from ours; that many of their practices and customs would be considered as desperate *grossièretés* with us; while, on the other hand, they might not understand, and therefore might possibly take offence at, some points in our conduct and manners, in which none could by possibility be intended. Besides, princes might think themselves entitled to take greater liberties than private individuals, or might claim more exclusive attention than could possibly be paid them; so that on the whole I was anxious as to the result of this debut.

We arrived early, so that the small number of persons already in the rooms had a good opportunity of seeing the princes as they proceeded with the slow and dignified step of Persian state to the apartment where they were received by the noble master and mistress of the mansion. Here they were accommodated with seats, on which the elder remained all the evening. I think the impression made by both his manners and appearance was favourable; and his jewelled dagger, which was handed round the room, was the object of universal admiration. This he had told me happened to be in his girdle when he was forced to fly. It was one, he took care to assure me, among the least beautiful and costly of a dozen others in his possession; but he loved it because it had enamelled upon it the picture of his eldest son, a boy of eight or nine years old, whom he described as most beautiful, and well-beloved. This picture represents a boy with the red cheeks and lips, long-shaped dark eyes, large pencilled brows, and long side-locks, which all Persian paintings give to their beautiful youths, and which really are the striking characteristics of the Kajer race; one of the finest,

perhaps, in the world, of which the royal progeny forms the handsomest as well as the largest family. The little fellow is clad in the usual dress in which they stand in the king's presence, with a hawk upon his fist; and with much complacency and parental delight did the prince point out the picture, and descant upon the perfections of his offspring. This beautiful dagger gave occasion to many questions regarding their escape and travels, their wives and families, the Persian ladies, &c.; and the prince declared that the lady of the house herself had no small resemblance to certain beauties of the royal family whom he named. He was delighted with the courtesy and kindness which he met with from all.

In the mean time the rooms filled with a crowd of the most distinguished in rank and fashion, and his royal highness had an opportunity of seeing some of those celebrated persons whose names had reached his ears even in Persia. Among these were the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, &c. &c. and several of the foreign ministers. Many of the company, both ladies and gentlemen, requested an introduction to the

elder prince; and so much was to be done in the way of interpretation, that I could attend to little else. Timour Meerza had contrived to form his own acquaintances; and when I left the elder prince for a moment to see what was going on, I found him in very animated intercourse by signs, aided by one or two words he had picked up, with a very pretty lady, who on her part appeared greatly amused and interested with her strange acquaintance. As for the Wali, he took matters coolly, sitting quietly in an observant mood until spoken to, when, on the question being interpreted, he always had his prompt reply at hand.

In fact, matters on the whole went on with tolerable smoothness; but there were occasional interruptions, chiefly from the *brusquerie* of my friend Timour, who has no great patience, nor idea of self-command. Feeling himself thirsty, and being told that water and refreshments were to be found in an apartment provided for them, he called out to me at the top of his voice, "Come along then, let us go and get it;" and with that he set himself to push and elbow his way through the crowd of *élégantes* and

fashionables in so rough a manner, that I hung back in dismay. On this he called out loudly to me to "come on: what was I waiting for?" This attracted attention enough, and to spare. "Look at him, how he goes!" said one. "See how he shoves and pushes the people!" said another. "That's a fellow that won't be easily stopped now. How loud he talks too!" said a third; and there was a general buzz of surprise, which made it disagreeable enough to me; and I took an opportunity of cautioning my young friend with regard to his future conduct in such cases. He took the admonition in perfect good part, but not without wondering in his turn that I could have seen anything contrary to propriety in his conduct. I own that I was not sorry when the elder prince, who became weary, proposed to depart; and we left the gay throng to return to our respective homes.

The next party to which I accompanied the princes was a still more serious affair. It was the Caledonian ball, to which the princes had received a polite invitation from the ladies patronesses, and to which no one could be admitted unless in costume or uniform. Their

usual dress, though far from a brilliant one, was sufficient for them; and though, from more causes than one, I was not in the best spirits for such an exertion, I was obliged myself to put on a Persian dress and join their party, to guide my helpless charges through the mazes of this numerous and brilliant assembly. I made use of a dress which I had worn in my late visit to Persia; but, when the princes saw it, they found as many faults with it as a London milliner would to the most grotesque foreign-built dress, or Stultz or Nugee to the cut of a Calcutta or Jamaica-made coat; and they insisted on piecing up my rig with certain articles from their own wardrobes. And certainly we did go forth a most purpose-like group of Persians.

The rooms were already full when we arrived, and it was with difficulty we made our way into the apartment where the ladies patronesses awaited the arrival of her Royal Highness the Landgravine of Hesse Hombergh. In this place the princes were introduced to several very distinguished personages, and among the rest to his Grace of Wellington. But the elder

prince, impatient of the crowd, asked with some anxiety "what was to be done? and whether a seat was to be had?" So I led him out of that crush-room to wind our way with difficulty into the greater crowd of the larger room.

Here he was absolutely lost and bewildered in the whirl of figures, and was considerably annoyed by the shoving and pushing which he endured from the moving throng. Yet I think he would have been gratified too, had it not been for a nervous terror which he laboured strongly under of meeting any *Shahzadehs*, or princes; for he had heard that some of the royal family were to honour the ball with their presence. The fact is, that he keenly feels the somewhat equivocal situation in which he knows himself to be placed. Unaccustomed to appear in public in any other character than that of a prince invested with considerable power and state, he conceives that all eyes are upon him, and cannot understand the possibility of mingling in society as a private individual. He experiences a sensation of shame, like one who knows he is committing an unworthy action, and seeks to hide himself from view.

At last he got ensconced behind a doorway, which happened to be the very one he would have avoided, had he known it to be that by which the Landgravine was to enter, attended by all the patronesses and a brilliant cortège. But his vain alarm was quieted, when, on the flood-gates opening, this tide of grand company rushed past him without even noticing his presence among the multitude of far gayer figures that gathered round to gaze upon it as it passed to the head of the grand saloon. He was a good deal struck with the procession of splendidly dressed ladies; but, as the greater number of them had passed the zenith of their youth and beauty, his observations were by no means universally complimentary. I think that he was more impressed by the striking up of the full band, than by the cause which called the music forth.

I left him after a while to look after the younger, Timour Meerza, who was plunging recklessly into the crowd, and who I feared might be lost altogether, as his costume was in no degree such as to make him conspicuous; and I reached him just as three pipers, the first

of them a giant in full tartans, entered the room, playing most loudly on their instruments, and followed by all the charity children in their kilts and bonnets. He was delighted with this, which was quite a novel sight to him; and his animated observations upon the various groups that thronged around us, if I could have written them down, would have been very amusing; but a friend coming up at the time, and offering to be his cicerone, I left them and returned to his elder brother.

I found him beginning to weary sadly, although more than one gentleman who understood a little Persian had come up and talked to him during my absence. "Come, let us be off," said he; "let us try and find out some quiet place. I want to get some water and some rest." So off we went to the refreshment-room, which at this time was nearly empty. But scarcely had we entered it, when parties began to drop in from the great rooms to taste the good things which were laid out. "Ah," said he, "this will do; let us stay here, this is the watering-place. The experienced hunter always seeks that out, for thither does all the

game repair. You will see now, we need not seek them; they will come to us." And so it proved: and there in comparative quiet did he for a while indulge in observations on all the ladies who passed us, as if in review, while, our own costumes not being very remarkable, he was not pestered with notice.

While sitting here, the bagpipes again struck up some pibrach; on which the prince, pricking up his ears, with a start, exclaimed, "What is that? that is Persian music! *Wullah!* that is my own country music. Hush! let me listen." And he leaned his head on one side as one does to catch a delicious strain. In fact, to unaccustomed ears, the sounds were not unlike the clangour of the *nokara khaneh,* or band that plays at stated intervals above the gates of Eastern princes; although an enthusiastic Highlander might not be altogether pleased with the comparison. As the pibrach continued, and the measure quickened, the prince became quite agitated. "*Ai-wahi! ai-wahi!*" said he, shaking his head slowly from side to side, "that is true Irânee; it brings my own country quite to my view! That is just the strain they play

when we go to fight. *Ai-wahi! ai-wahi!*" And his eyes, half filled with tears, were actually dancing in his head. It was well that the music ceased before his agitation became quite ungovernable, as seemed likely soon to be the case.

During this time the Wali, with the interpreter, had taken care of themselves, and visited, I believe, every part of the rooms: I could not accompany them, as the elder prince was more dependent, and required my aid; but, after a time, the rolling tide of company brought them within hail, and he desired them to keep by him until I should find Timour. This was no easy task, for he enjoyed the bustle, and was not disposed to be caught. But at length, being thoroughly weary, he came in like an exhausted fish to the hand of the angler; and we all left the gay scene, with food enough to supply reflection for some time.

On going to the hotel (the next day, I think,) I was happy to find with the princes Sir G. O., so long an ambassador at the court of Persia. He had, I believe, already called on them; and nothing could be more fortunate for their com-

fort than the presence of this gentleman in London. Interested in all that relates to their country, and well acquainted with their father and family, having remained at Sheerauz for some time at a period when they were but children, Sir G. was naturally desirous to make the country which they now visited as strangers as agreeable to them as possible, and to promote their views so far as might be expedient; while, on the other hand, no one could be better qualified to do so, both from his intimate knowledge of their language, and his wide acquaintance with the best society. In fact, what with the constant company of Meerza, who fortunately, from its being the season of vacation at Hayleybury, could dedicate the most of his time to his countrymen, and who had considerately been requested to do so by the authorities at the Foreign Office,—with the kind attentions of Sir G. O., and my own endeavours to provide in all ways for their comfort, the condition of these princes might assuredly have been one of very considerable enjoyment, could they have been but wise enough to make the most of it. But, unfortunately for themselves, they

had not philosophy enough to enjoy the present without brooding over the past, or thinking of the future. The recollections of what they had lost,—of the uncertainty which hung over the fate of their families, and their own future destinies, was a constant source of anxiety, that preyed on the minds, particularly of the two elder, and rendered them incapable of tasting the pleasures that were offered to them. Not that they altogether shunned society; on the contrary, a quiet party, particularly a dinner party, consisting of a few pleasant persons, and, above all, the company of pretty women after it, was their delight. "We are true *Pillaw-khoors*," (eaters of pillaw—that is, dinner-men,) have they often said to me. "We like to take our evening's meal where we are to pass our evening, and not to go out after it." And well did they enjoy such parties. It was a crowd —a great promiscuous crowd—which the two eldest disliked. As for the youngest, he made nothing of elbowing his way through everything. But even a ball or rout they could relish occasionally, provided they had some snug place separate from the throng where they

could sit down and see it pass. "Is there a *jaee pákeezah, jaee khelwut*—a comfortable quiet place, where we are going, where we may be out of the bustle?" was the usual question asked of me by the elder prince, when I mentioned to him an invitation, or put him in mind of an engagement. "Will it not be such a crush and a hubbub as we found at such and such a place?" And when we had entered, and looked round the rooms, he would immediately make for some recess or sofa in the least crowded apartment, where he would ensconce himself. "Ay, this is the place, Saheb Fraser; let us sit here; it is private: here we can see all that passes, and make our remarks." And, in fact, to these places his friends and acquaintances soon found their way; the ladies, particularly, came to see, and amuse themselves; so that they had quite as much as they desired of what was going on.

One of the first acts of attention on the part of Sir G. O. was to introduce them to Mrs. W. L., a lady of the world of fashion, who, on the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, gave at her house near Grosvenor-gate an elegant de-

jeuné, and who was kind enough to invite the princes to view the grand review given on that day, in Hyde-park, from that commanding situation. Nothing could have been more happily arranged. From the top of Mrs. W. L.'s house the whole field was visible, and every evolution of the troops might be seen; while, after the review was over, we had a brilliant show of the officers in their gay costumes, who came in succession to pay their compliments to the numerous assemblage of ladies who filled the rooms above.

There were, as I understood, nearly five thousand men of the Guards and household troops on the field; such men, in point of figure, dress, and appointments, horses included, as probably Europe could not equal, certainly not surpass; and the rapid precision with which every movement and manœuvre was performed was admirably calculated to strike and astonish the Persians, who, though accustomed to military displays of a very different description, could yet appreciate the perfection which they witnessed here. "What *sungers!*" (fortified stockades or bulwarks), said they, when the infantry formed

their impregnable squares, and stood prepared to receive cavalry. "One would say that each *sunger* was a solid mass: not a foot nor an arm is out of place. See! it is a white line, and a red line, with the steel glittering above. Ah, look! they kneel, they fire,—*barikillah, barikillah!* admirable!"

As for Timour, he was quite unable to contain himself. He stood with flushed cheek, flashing eye, and outstretched neck, like a bird on the wing, following every movement as if he would have precipitated himself down among the performers. "Ah, well done, well done!" exclaimed he, as the horse-guards made a splendid charge; "these fellows will do the business. But what do they stop for?" continued he, looking blank, as the whole drew up at the proper place, quite forgetting that it was not a charge in earnest. "Ah! look at these horses," said he again, as two or three horses with empty saddles ran across the plain in a very business-like style; "their riders have got shot now! (gola khourdund.)" But when the light cavalry took to skirmishing with the retreating artillery, and harassing them, selon les règles, without closing, he lost

all patience; "*Ai na-merdha!*—Ah, cowards!" exclaimed he; "why don't you charge at once like men? charge ye—and the guns are taken."

In a little while the whole body of flying artillery swept by at speed, a splendid sight: "What do you think of that?" said some of the bystanders. "*Ah, Piderish be suzund!*" returned he with a shake of the head; "may their fathers be roasted! we know too much of these concerns, to our cost. These were the things that Lindsay (Sir Henry Bethune Lindsay) had, when he met us near Komaishah; and when we were galloping up with our horsemen, and thought we were carrying everything before us, he stopped short all at once, and blew us to the devil."

The elder prince was more collected, and confined himself, for the most part, to moderate exclamations of praise; or, if questioned as to his opinion of the beauty of such or such an evolution, he would say "it was perfection,—could not be better." But when at length, after some heavy firing both of artillery and infantry, with a beautifully sustained display of file-firing from the latter, the smoke blew away, disclosing one long and perfect line of troops, as steady as a

rock, flanked by the terrible batteries that had just been thundering, he was quite surprised out of all his moderation, and, after a few most expressive ejaculations, he turned to me and said, "Wullah! Saheb Fraser, the horsemen of Irân are the best in the world, as you know well; but if there were a hundred thousand of them here on the spot, they could not touch that line;—that line! what could touch it?" The review was over, the show at an end; yet still he stood gazing, till at length the movement of those around him woke him from a sort of trance, which no doubt had as much to do with the past as the present. He heaved a deep sigh, and said, as we passed on to descend, "What are a hundred balls or operas to this?"

And now a brilliant scene took place in the beautiful rooms of our kind hostess, which were opened to receive both the actors and spectators of the gay pageant just terminated without. In they came, "fair women and brave men;" the former, of the highest and loveliest and most gifted of the land, who all clustered around the princes with much interest; and among them Malibran, the hapless and lamented Malibran,

who was mightily taken with the vivacity and independence, yet gentle bearing, of Prince Timour. Among the latter were not a few of those who had themselves taken part in the memorable engagement of which this was the anniversary, and the princes were here introduced to many individuals whose names will have no mean place in the history of those glorious days. In they came, all glittering in their gorgeous uniforms, brilliant fragments of a shining spectacle, until the whole house, refreshment-rooms and all, sparkled like a palace of the Genii. But the highest attractions in time will cease to please; and, at length fatigued with excitement, the princes took leave of their obliging entertainer and returned home.

## LETTER VI.

The next amusement to which I carried the princes was the Coliseum in Regent's Park. I had already found that there was no judging of the probable effect of any novelty on their unpractised senses by that which it produced on our own minds, so that I rather expected a disappointment on this occasion than otherwise. They traversed the gallery in the first place, and viewed all the busts and statues with considerable attention. They recognised the Duke of Wellington; were interested by the busts of his Majesty and several of his ministers, which were pointed out to them; and made some shrewd remarks on several of the full-length statues, particularly on some antique ones of females in a nude state. There is the cast of a colossal head of Alexander the Great,

the original of which, in marble, has been much corroded by exposure to weather, probably; so that the countenance has the appearance of being pitted all over with small irregular holes, resembling the small-pox. The princes believed this resemblance to be intentional, and bestowed upon it their unqualified approbation. "Ah! how admirably that is done," said they; "see, it is exactly the small-pox!"

They preferred ascending by steam in the cylinder, to mounting the staircase on foot. The movement astonished them a good deal; but it was not altogether a grateful sense of wonder, for they declared that it brought back something of their old steam-boat feelings, which afforded no pleasurable retrospect. At length they were landed in the first gallery above; and, whatever may have been their expectations, these were assuredly, on this occasion, far surpassed by the reality. I never saw men more delighted than they all were when the admirable Panorama of London burst upon their view. They remained long silent, but you saw by the radiant and smiling countenances what was going on within; and the Wali's little short-sighted eyes twinkled

like sparks of fire from between their half-closed lids. Long did they examine every part of the picture, both with the naked eye and the glasses that are placed there for the purpose, scarcely giving utterance to a word, except an occasional "*Ajaéb!*"—wonderful! but after looking at everything far and near, the villages beyond the town, and, above all, the river and the bridges, they began to ask questions. They appeared quite to understand that it was a painting upon a sheet, for they asked whether such and such things were or were not on the *purdeh* (or screen); and "*ai Barikillah, ai Barikillah!*" burst continually from their mouths, while the slow wagging of the head denoted their delight at each new object which required and obtained explanation. And "How far may that place there be from where we stand?" "Just fifty feet." "*Ajaéb!* and it looks as if it were two fursuks (seven or eight miles) off!" "*Mashallah!* what an *oostâde* (master) the painter must be! And it is true, all true; it *is* a *tucht* (plank, or plane surface) above, for there are the cracks in the plaster; and see! there is the point where the *purdeh* begins; you see no cracks there: wonderful! God

is great!" They were told the time and price which the painting had cost,—forty thousand pounds, I think, and six years of hard work. "*Mee-arzed*,—it is worth it all," said they with a nod of consent. To persons unaccustomed to hear of great monied speculations, it was no small surprise to hear that the £200,000, which this establishment cost to the first projectors, was all private outlay; but their wonder was still greater at being told that it had already cleared off two-thirds of its original cost, and would soon become a source of great profit. They were interested greatly in the whole concern, and went to the top to see the real view of London obtained from thence, but that did not please them half as much as the painted city; and they withdrew, assuring me that they had been infinitely gratified, and that they must often again come to visit "London" in the Coliseum.

From thence we drove round the park to the Zoological Gardens, and I was happy to find that this gay resort of young and old had its full share of attraction for the princes. Timour, as usual, treated rather contemptuously the specimens of certain animals which were familiar to

him on a more magnificent scale; and he was particularly amused with an unhappy camel, which was all they had to represent the herds of noble carriers of the desert, which swarm with every wandering tribe in Persia and Arabia. But they were all struck with admiration at the giraffes, a creature which they had neither seen nor heard of before. It was an interesting incident too, that one of the attendants, a negro, spoke Arabic; so that all of them, the Wali in particular, being the learned one, were able to converse with, and receive from him a full account of his graceful charges. The crowd, however, thickened round us so much during this conversation, that we were obliged to take to flight. Indeed, we went through the whole pretty much at a gallop; but it was an introduction to an amusement of very easy access, to which the princes might frequently return; and, as we took our way homewards, they all declared themselves delighted with their day's work, which I believe they would have wished to terminate there.

But such was not their fate. They had desired to see one of the theatres, and I had got a

box for them at Drury-lane; so that instead of turning in to sleep for a few hours, and then rising to a late dinner, as they would have wished, they had to dine at six, in order to be in proper time for the performance. The play, or rather opera, was the Siege of Rochelle, I think; but, in spite of good intentions, we only arrived to see the commencement of the second act, and as this began with a gallant dance, they were all perfectly delighted. "*Aajaib jaee!*—a wonderful place this! what riches, and what women! what dresses they have, and what waists! what bosoms! and all alike too—all as if they had been cast in one mould! And how their steps all go together! Wonderful indeed! this is *Behisht* (Paradise):" this was spoken of the corps-de-ballet, which was figuring away; and when the principal dancers came forward, of course their admiration did not fail to augment. But their interest in the piece ceased with the dancing; they could not understand the plot; and as for explaining the story as we went along, that, even the Meerza, who was with us, gave up. A little of the buffoonery they seemed to relish; and the last act, comprehending some

little fighting and the blowing up of the city gates, was rather more in their way; but, on the whole, they were so tired that there was some question about their staying the afterpiece. This was Gustavus the Third, which, though they could scarcely comprehend the first part, terminates in a masqued ball, that delighted them beyond measure, and sent them home declaring that, in spite of fatigue, they had seldom spent a day of greater enjoyment. You may be sure I was not the party least pleased when we all separated for the night at the door of the hotel; and I went to my own lodging in the full confidence of waking with a racking headache on the morrow.

Having been agreeably surprised by the pleasure they had derived from their visit to the Panorama, I thought they could scarce fail to be gratified by a view of the exhibition at Somerset-house. Had I reflected on the important difference which must subsist to an unpractised eye, between an immense collection of works of art, to appreciate which requires a species of positive education,—and a single chef-d'œuvre, the great merit of which depends less on strict

adherence to rules of art, than on presenting to the senses, by a very wonderful optical illusion, a fac-simile of reality, and is therefore palpable to all, I should have probably calculated upon the disappointment which I experienced in seeing the feeble impression which this magnificent exhibition produced; in fact, I had my doubts, though scarcely admitted to myself until the result proved their good foundation. They were bewildered rather than delighted; few of the landscapes interested them; and some of our first-rate artists would have been more surprised than pleased at the observations which the sight of their works called forth. The portraits were more attractive, especially those at full length of certain ladies; and both the two younger, particularly Timour, made some wonderfully shrewd remarks on the skill exhibited in the foreshortened limbs of one or two figures: one especially, in which a lady held her hand over her eyes as if shading her sight to catch some object, and another, called, I think, the infant warrior, with a great sword across his little lap, met with great applause. "*Che hereket!*—what movement there is! what expression!" was re-

iterated as they returned, more than once, to the point of admiration.

As a sportsman, Timour could not fail of being struck with Landseer's pictures; he would fain have been Lord Ossulston himself, gazing on his quarry as in the picture, though he could not quite comprehend how that quarry could be a bullock rather than a deer, even after I explained to him the nature of the game to which the specimen in the picture refers. But Chantry's dog, and the eyes of the cat fixed on the group of woodcocks in his admirable picture for the great sculptor, won his unqualified and almost noisy admiration. The great naval picture was gazed upon with wonder, not unmingled with unpleasant remembrances; but the Wali, much as he hates the sea and all belonging to it, paid a tribute to the liquidity of the water, and to the masterly manner in which the broken and splintered wood was represented. It was not to be expected that he could appreciate the more scientific perfections of that fine work of Stanfield's.

We paid a short visit to the sculpture-room, and I was rather surprised at observing that

some of the statues made fully as great an impression, particularly on the two elder princes, as the pictures; a remark which was more than once confirmed in the sequel. They admired the fleshy softness imparted to the marble, and were delighted with some of the children and female figures: but the survey both of pictures and sculpture was made in a very rapid way; and the total amount of satisfaction, balanced against the weariness and listlessness that prevailed throughout the greater part of the time, left little encouragement to set down picture exhibitions among the objects best calculated to amuse or instruct them.

I do not mention all the balls and parties to which the princes went, particularly those to which, from various circumstances, I did not accompany them; and still less would it amuse you to hear of the various and sundry invitations which I was obliged to refuse on their part. They were, I assure you, perfectly sensible of what was due to their own dignity, and saw through the indelicacy which would have held them out to public view, not so much to amuse them as for the gratification of others,—lions to

attract, and fill a suite of rooms for the night. "What sort of a place is this to which we are invited?" was the question always put to me when a letter or a note of invitation was handed to me. "Are the people respectable, the family noble? have we seen them? have any of them been introduced to us, or, through whom has their invitation been sent? It is surely against all rule for a perfect stranger to ask persons in our situation, as it must be so for us to accept of such unceremonious invitation. Is it to be the story of the *Khirs-e-Dushmunzearee?*" Now the *Khirs*, or Bear of Dushmunzearee, was, it appears, a terrible wild animal, which having committed great ravages, its name was used as a bugbear to quiet naughty children, although, however, being taken alive and brought to the town, multitudes came to see it, and it thus enriched its captors. Hence every monster produced to attract public notice is, in Persia, proverbially termed a *Khirs-e-Dushmunzearee.* So I was obliged to relate what particulars I knew of the soliciting parties, and to pledge myself for the respectability of those whose invitations I recommended their accepting. "Well," would

the prince say, "we are in your hands, Saheb Fraser; our honour is in your keeping; we are strangers, you must be our guide and guard; where you tell me to go, I will go; where you think I should not go, I will not visit; and remember, I go nowhere without you."

This was rather more of confidence than was, perhaps, perfectly convenient or agreeable for me, but scarcely more than a man in the prince's situation, keenly sensitive on the score of reputation and respect, naturally shy and reserved, a stranger in a distant country, the manners of which were totally at variance from those of his own, might be naturally inclined to repose in the person appointed as his guide and adviser. But, though it trammelled me so completely as to leave me scarcely any freedom at all, I could not, from motives independent of mere duty, have refused the trust. There was a charm of sweetness and of dignity about the elder prince, a mild and gentlemanly deportment, which secured to him affection as well as respect from those of any feeling around him. It was impossible not to be inspired with attachment as well as interest for one who had suffered so much; and who,

having strong claims upon sympathy and deference, bore the loss of departed yet not forgotten greatness, and present misfortunes, so meekly. I have never, so far as I remember, known a Persian of any rank possessed of so many amiable qualities, yet exhibiting so few of the besetting vices of his country. In fact, his sentiments are so just, and his conduct so correct, that one cannot refrain from attributing to him a high degree of moral virtue. Thus, from day to day did I become more bound to the princes, and they more dependent on me, till in time they put their threat in practice, almost literally, and seldom would go out without me. But still, when they desired to excuse themselves from a party, the plea was, "No, no, we will not go there, Saheb Fraser; it is the *Khirs-e-Dush-munzearee.*"

But, in truth, their reluctance to go to parties, which I early observed, did not altogether arise from a dislike to meet the public gaze; it had its portion also in a sort of innate indolence, a reluctance to exertion, which was only to be overcome by some strong temptation. Even their forenoons were generally spent in a sort of

lounging inaction,—either looking over articles brought by tradesmen on view, or receiving visitors, or writing journals and bits of poetry; often in sleep. The great in Persia are very irregular in their habits of life. They rise, in general, early, because those who attend to their religious duties are bound to pray at sunrise. It is then they transact various pieces of business, and after a very light meal, at a later hour, they again retire to their harems until afternoon; then they come out, ride, or see company till after evening prayer, when they go and sit with their families, and dine late, often sitting up till the hour of midnight prayer arrives: but they preserve no regularity, often calling at other hours for food; and frequently, throwing over themselves a coverlit, they sleep where they sit.

The regular irregularity of a London life, you will see, squares but ill with this sort of anomalous freedom of action. All men in European countries are in some sort dependent upon others in point of service and assistance; and, where the division of labour is carried to so great an extent, few can maintain an establishment so large as to admit of commanding service of

all sorts and at all hours. Our poor princes, although certainly their humours and fancies were as much studied at the hotel as possible, found the habits of other people constantly interfering with theirs; and they were often summoned to "mount and go" when they would far rather have remained quiet at home. In fact, it most frequently happened that, when I called in the forenoon to take them to some show or amusement, all, or part of them, were asleep; and the time for effecting the purpose intended was past before they could all be got ready. This was so worrying, that at length, whenever there was an appointment to be kept, I made it a point to call them a full hour before the requisite time.

But this extreme indolence was chiefly owing to the want of a suitable exciting motive: had a riding or hunting party, for instance, at any time been proposed to Timour Meerza, he would have sprung up at once with alacrity to join it. A visit to the gunsmith's, where he had ordered some things to be made, was a never-failing cure for *ennui* to him; a review would have awakened them all; and in the sequel they made acquaintance with several fair friends, whom the elder

prince himself would have hastened to meet at any hour. I must, however, except Timour from the general charge of sleeping away his hours: he had discovered a great taste for drawing; and having provided himself with a box of colours, pencils, and paper, he spent a great deal of his time in copying prints or colouring them, or making most extraordinary figures of living things out of the resources of his own imagination; and, while the others were either dozing or writing in their rooms above, I have generally found him thus employed below.

The next party of importance to which I accompanied them was to a splendid ball given by Mr. H. at his magnificent house in D—— street. At the desire of Sir G. O., who wished to introduce the princes to his lady, we met at his house, and sat there for an hour before proceeding to the ball. Lady O. had known the family of the Firmaun Firmaee, and particularly the mother of the elder and younger prince when they were both young; and the renewal of this acquaintance was to them a very pleasing incident, recalling many interesting associations, so that they soon found themselves at home: as for the

Wali, he got fixed by a splendid Oriental MS., which Sir G. put into his hand, and which soon absorbed all his attention.

At length, however, to D—— street we all went, and found fourteen or fifteen superb rooms, filled with the most classic furniture and richest decorations, thrown open for the accommodation of an immense crowd of all that London could give forth of gay, and fair, and fashionable. The princes, having by this time formed a tolerable circle of acquaintances, began to take greater interest in the scenes that were passing, and even to recognise individuals whom they did not personally know. They now were never alone; their conspicuous figures soon brought their friends, particularly the ladies, to the place where they stood or sat; and the time passed agreeably enough in endeavours to maintain some degree of conversation. It was hard work for the poor interpreters; and, fortunately for me there was Sir G. himself in this case always ready, and more able than me to satisfy the curiosity of the fair inquirers, or of the princes themselves. They were delighted at meeting several of the ladies patronesses who had been

attentive to them at the fancy ball: but they were particularly attracted by the beauty of Lady N., which they pronounced to be quite Persian; a standard to which, amid the infinite variety of female loveliness with which they were surrounded, they still adhered as that of perfection. This style of beauty consists, as probably you know, in an oval countenance, approaching to round; a rich but rather dark complexion; small delicate nose, small mouth, with full, moist, red lips; large dark eyes, well-fringed with long lashes, and deepened and lengthened artificially by the use of the *surmah*, or black antimony, and over-arched by very black well-pencilled brows, nearly meeting above the nose; long black hair, braided into three or four great plaits behind, and having a lock or two wandering down the cheek and fair plump neck. Now there is much in all this, which you will be inclined to pronounce with them as constituting very strong pretensions to beauty, without prejudice to the claims of other styles and shades of colour. We had been talking a little of this at Sir G.'s before coming to the ball, and the prince had quoted his own aunt, a sister of his father's,

a lady whom Lady O. had frequently seen, as being a perfect specimen of their idea of beauty. To this Lady O. had cordially assented, declaring that she was in reality a very lovely woman; and promised to show him that night a lady who, to the best of her recollection, resembled his aunt very strongly. In the course of the night her ladyship performed her promise, introducing his royal highness to Lady H., the mother of Lady N.; and the prince at once admitted the resemblance. "But," said he, "*this* lady cannot be the *mother* of that lady; they must be sisters;" at which there was a laugh: but every one acknowledged that he was right; for who could see Lady H. surrounded by her beautiful daughters, and not imagine that she was but their eldest sister?

At this ball the princes really enjoyed themselves. I was weary of translating compliments and saying fine things; but the elder still insisted on remaining for a great part of the time in a comparatively retired spot, where he sat pensively watching the whirling throng before him, and ever and anon giving vent to some of the various ejaculations, or poetical snatches,

with which his countrymen are so fond of relieving a surcharged or bewildered mind. Timour had discovered an acquaintance, a very pretty woman, with whom, by means of his few broken English words, gestures, and occasional assistance from an interpreter, he contrived to keep up a very lively intercourse. It is wonderful with how small a number of words one may get on upon occasions; I once myself kept up a full conversation with a Russian major, my host, who did not understand a single word of any other language than his own, upon the strength of two Russian words, namely "good" and "bad;" and in Timour's case there was the additional language of the eyes in aid of all the rest. As for the Wali, he and the interpreter Assad kept together during the greater part of the evening, roaming at will through the crowd from one apartment to another, looking at the dancers, gazing at the ladies, who gazed at him in return; listening to the bands of music, and tossing off a glass of champaigne between whiles. I despaired of ever getting together the straggling flock when the time of retreating should arrive. At length, having seated the elder prince in one

of the ante-rooms, I went to look for the rest; and, having found Timour, with great difficulty tore him away from the attractions of the scene. We were all three together when his quick eye caught the Arab cloak of the Wali, and the interpreter's turban floating away in the crowd far off at the other end of the room or gallery; and he immediately began to bellow out "Ai Wali! Ai Wali!" just as if he had been shouting to a fellow-hunter across a ravine. You may imagine how the people stared, and how uncomfortably I felt; and I took the opportunity to point out this, and some other matters connected with conduct in society, to the elder prince, as things regarding which it would be well if he should caution his younger brothers. The wonder was that there was so little on the whole to reprove.

Balls, at this period, came thick upon us. Their royal highnesses had been invited for the very next evening to a magnificent fancy ball, to be held at the Hanover-square rooms, by the ladies patronesses themselves; and to it accordingly we went. It was an immense crowd; and, as none were admitted otherwise than in

costume or uniform, the effect was inexpressibly brilliant. The princes, too, saw it to great advantage; for, by the kind activity of their friends, seats were procured for them in one of the small galleries above, to which there is access granted only to certain privileged people, and where they could sit and overlook the glittering throng without being crowded or mixing with it. The elder prince continued in the seat prepared for him all night, conversing with the ladies who came up from time to time, some of whom remained pretty closely by him while he stayed: among them, however, were some of his friends; so that he had plenty of attention and amusement during the whole evening.

Hard work again for the interpreters! A constant repetition of the same questions and compliments.—Question, "Ask them do they like England?" Answer, "How can we do otherwise, seeing the great kindness we have met with here?"—"Is Persia a fine country?" "*Bellee*—to be sure! it is a fine country, and it is our own country; but what is it to England? Where is all the riches, and the know-

ledge, and the means and appliances (*ausá*) of every kind that we meet with here, to be found in Persia?"—"Do ask them what they think of the English ladies?" "Ah! what can I think of them, but that they are angels—Paradise itself!"—"What do they think of our dancing? I am sure they must be shocked at that!" "What should we think, but that all that you do is good?"—"Do Persian ladies dance?" "No, no; Astaffer Allah! (God forbid!) they look at the dancing women,—the king has many dancing women for the purpose of amusing them."—"Ask them if the Persian ladies are handsome?" "Certainly handsome; but not like English ladies." (Then in broken English:) "Persian ladies no good—English ladies much good!"—"Ask him how many wives he has?" This being a question which, in Persia, can never be put, and if put would certainly not be replied to, it produced here only a variety of jokes, equivocations, or inventions. "No, no; no wife; wife gone dead!" (with a mock-melancholy look.) Or, "One — no more, Wullah!"—"Ah, he does not tell truth; tell him it is a very bad custom

that of taking so many wives. What do they do with them all? I suppose he cuts off their heads sometimes with that great knife he wears in his girdle?" The prince smiled at such observations, and used to explain by signs that the ladies were rather apt to use him ill than he to maltreat the ladies; and that they often used to hit him cuffs and pinch him well, which he pretended he could not hinder them from doing; in short, that he was under petticoat government:—at which, of course, his fair questioners would shake their heads and laugh. On this occasion, in reply to the abuse which was launched against polygamy, he offered one ingeniously devised excuse, which succeeded, as he could see, so well, that he repeated it more than once in the sequel.

"Tell these ladies," said he to me, "that our Persian women are not like those of England,—educated, accomplished, fitted to be companions to their husbands; they can do little except embroider and look after their slaves, or cook a dinner. Now, your English ladies are as well educated as yourselves, and are full of accomplishments; they retain their beauty so well,

that, after having had a large family, they are still lovely and blooming;—*Wullah!* they are fresher and more lovely after forty, than our women are at twenty-five. Thus, one English woman is worth at least ten Persian women, and so we take quantity to make up for quality; had we English women, then one would suffice." I need not tell you how much this sort of reasoning amused and delighted his fair auditors.

## LETTER VII.

A DAY or two afterwards, the princes dined with Lord P., at whose house they had the honour of being introduced to some of the most distinguished personages of the day. There is something in the privacy of even a large dinner party which gives to every individual, and especially to those who figure as principal guests, a degree of conspicuousness which is sometimes painful; and I confess that I had not as yet acquired sufficient confidence in my charges, to enable me to see them mingle with strangers at a formal party of this sort without some qualms of apprehension. The customs of the East, as regards those matters, are so different from those of the West, that I continually dreaded the occurrence of some solecism or failure in politeness on their part, which should make

them disagreeably remarkable. Dinner in Persia, though the chief meal of the day, and of course, as in all countries, a serious affair, is a matter of far less importance or duration than with us. Even when a Persian gives a feast to his friends, the time of eating scarcely occupies half an hour. The guests sit on the felt carpets along one side, or at the top of the room, with their backs leaning against the wall; a long narrow strip of chintz or coloured cotton, called the *sofra*, (or, as we should say, table-cloth,) is spread before the whole party by two servants. Basins and ewers containing cold water are handed; and, the right hand being held above the former, a little water from the latter is poured upon it. This is the ablution before meals. Trays of whitened copper, termed *mujmuahs*, are then brought in; each containing, in general, a dish of beautiful plain boiled rice, with another of some sort of pillaw,—that is, rice with butter and meat, or vegetables, or both; one or two smaller dishes containing exquisite stews, to season the rice; some pickles, sweetmeats, cut pieces of radish and turnip, a sort of

omelette, a partridge or fowl stewed to rags in some sweet or sour sauce, and one or two bowls of different sherbets, each having a long-handled carved pear-wood spoon floating in it. One of these mujmuahs, thus loaded, is placed usually for every two guests; and, when all are thus served, the master of the feast, uttering the word "*Bismillah!*—In the name of God!" by way of grace, leans forwards, and the whole fall to.

From that time till the affair is finished, which, as I have said, does not exceed half an hour, not a word is uttered; the fingers are busily employed in forming the *lugmehs*, or handfuls of rice, mingled with the other things, with which the jaws are kept a-going, the only cessation being to swallow a spoonful or two of the sherbet. By and by one or two arise from their stooping posture, or keep only trifling with their fingers till their host erects himself with an audible "*Alhumdulillah!*—Thanks be to God!" which is echoed by the company. This is not unfrequently followed by indications of repletion, which are considered with us as a most grievous breach of good manners, but with them are only so many

tributes to their host's good cheer: then follows the washing of hands, often an imperfect enough ceremony; and the removal of the greasy table-cloth, with its contents. Other trifles there are, which I need not particularize, that would shock our notions of cleanliness and good-breeding. But you will see, from this hasty sketch, the utter dissimilarity between a Persian and an English dinner party. There is nothing of the elegance and refinement, the mingling of conversation with the more sensual enjoyment of eating, and the delightful social charm which hallows the lengthened pleasures of the English meal. The charm of social intercourse, and very delightful conversation, I am far from denying to Persians; but it is not at meals that it usually displays itself.

Now, you can imagine that, knowing all this, and how much the great in Persia are in their habits guided by impulse, I sat long upon thorns on such occasions, and afraid of some unlucky explosion. At the hotel, during meals, even when they had invited a guest to dine with them, the princes seemed to hold themselves bound by no rule of ceremony; particularly the

two youngest, who would start up from table without the least cause assigned, and leave the room, humming an air or spouting a piece of poetry, as if to show their unconcern. They had eat enough, or were tired of sitting, or wanted to say a prayer, or some other crotchet had suddenly struck their brain; and they never imagined that they were committing an indelicacy towards others in indulging it. I have seen some of their guests, grave, well-bred persons, right sore astonished at such a bolt. "Is the prince unwell?" they would inquire; and, on being told that it was nothing but some momentary whim that had struck him, seemed much inclined to look upon it as the effect of a trifling crack in the poor man's cranium. The elder prince, who assuredly has as much as any man I ever saw of an intuitive sense of courtesy, was very soon brought to see and to correct these eccentricities; but the Wali could not be plagued to do so when at home, and Timour was too thoughtless to attend to what was told him. All with him was the impulse of the moment; I have seen him, when a favourite dish was brought in to serve for the whole company, fairly empty the con-

tents of it into his own plate; and this not from greediness, for he is far from deficient in liberality, but from utter want of consideration, produced by that selfishness which is the vice of education in those who have been reared as chiefs and princes. I have seen him do the same thing as a sort of brag, and, after having looked round the company and laughed at their blank faces, quietly rise and empty from his own plate into theirs two-thirds of what he had taken. Now, you know that, however atrocious such a proceeding might seem to us, it does not shock Orientals, to whom it is a sort of distinction to receive a handful from the plate of a great man.

I remember Timour himself long after, when he had become more acquainted with our customs and ways of proceeding, talk very amusingly of his own strange habits before he had seen European manners. "I used to do wonderful things," said he, "and sometimes I astonished Mr. F. (the British consul at Damascus, in whose house they stayed for a while). You know our customs at dinner, and how we help ourselves without ceremony to things at a distance, if what we fancy does not happen to be before us. I

remember once while sitting at dinner, that, having nothing that pleased me within reach, I stretched over, and stuck my fork into a great stewed bird at the other side of the table, and brought it all dripping to my own plate, upsetting several things on the way. How Mr. F. did stare, and then laugh! but he explained to me then that such was not the European fashion, and that we always should ask for what we want, and receive a portion; so I took care not to do so again." But, nevertheless, I remember seeing the Wali perform exactly similar feats, though not at places where they were on any ceremony.

I must, however, do the whole of them the justice to say, that I do not remember a single occasion where, either by mistake or inconsiderateness, they committed the smallest noticeable impropriety in company; on the contrary, not only was their conduct guided by strict good-breeding, but they obviously exerted themselves to show their sense of the kindness they experienced by all means in their power: and so well did they acquit themselves in their behaviour, and so rapidly did they acquire the

habits of those they associated with, that few would have imagined they had ever been accustomed to other modes of life. On the present occasion the conversation was most animated, both during the time of dinner and afterwards; and I believe that there was no one present who did not leave the party with a very favourable impression of the Persian princes.

One day, about the end of June, I called as usual after breakfast on the princes. The eldest was lounging in bed up-stairs. I expressed my surprise to him that he should waste so much time in indolence and inactivity when he had so excellent an opportunity of employing it beneficially. "What am I to do?" replied he. "Here am I without any real business to call for exertion, and with an anxious heavy heart. I take no joy in what is going on. I have little pleasure in going out anywhere. What then can I do so good as to keep in bed, and sleep when I am able? When awake, what have I to think of but of my wives and children, my brothers and sisters, and all the family of my father, whom I left in captivity or misery? God knows what their

fate is now! Have they been permitted to live? Are they still prisoners? Is the honour of our women yet preserved? Have they got bread to eat, or clothes to cover them? These are the thoughts that make me miserable; and is it wonderful they should do so? You know that everything is on my head; I must think for all. For, what help to me is that thoughtless fellow Timour Meerza, or even the Wali? They have none of the burthen to bear. They all look to me." I admitted that he had much to think of, and many cares; but urged that there was no use in indulging in melancholy. He had done his best for those committed to his charge, and his conscience might be at rest as regarded them. Why encourage unpleasant anticipations? All would, *inshallah!* go well; and, in any case, premature sorrow was not only useless, but hurtful. "Your observation is a just one," replied he; "all you say is right: but it is impossible to command the spirit, or to prevent the uncertain future from causing us uneasiness. You recommend me to go and enjoy myself,—to see sights, and go to

operas, and such amusements; and by the favour of the English government I can do all this; but where is the heart to relish these pleasures? I am not even certain that it is right in me to indulge myself as far as I do; for, a few days hence, and where will all these fine things and grand sights be? I shall have left them for ever; and only the remembrance of them will dwell with me, when to renew the enjoyment will be impossible."—"But, prince, surely this is going much too far; at that rate, no one should ever rejoice to-day, because grief may come to-morrow." And the words of the old song came to my recollection:

> "Since pleasure can only bring pain,
> Let us all be unhappy together."

But I did not try to explain them; I only followed up the *reductio ad absurdum,* by adding, "Is a man not to eat a good dinner to-day, because he may be obliged to go without one to-morrow?"—"Ay," replied he, "you are right; these were but random words of mine. I will take your advice, and see what there is to be seen to-day, and afterwards let

come what pleases God." So I went out, and got them a box for the opera of that very night.

In the mean time the prince had a lesson as to the difference between buying and selling in England. A gentleman from Storr and Mortimer's had waited on him to show some of their beautiful work in jewellery. The prince was delighted with the splendour and execution of the ornaments, but still more astonished at the prices put upon each article. "Well," said he, "as such things bear so high a value here, perhaps it may suit my purpose to dispose of a few. Let us see what he says as to purchasing." So he ordered his servant to bring a few pearls and other articles, which he had still retained; and, as a matter of curiosity, his beautiful dagger, to hear what they would say of it. The result was as usual in such cases. The values named, though only at a rough guess, were so far under those at which they were estimated by the owner, that he exclaimed, "Ay, it is well seen how you make your money. Here you ask me three times as much for your goods as they would fetch with us;

but you won't offer me one half of what mine actually cost me at home!"

In the evening I called to take them to the opera. "Ah! Saheb Fraser," said Timour Meerza, meeting me with a face all beaming with joy, "we have had great luck to-day. Do you know, we have got hold of a regular Persian *sáz* (musical instrument),—a *centâra*, or dulcimer! A man came here to play to us on something like it; so I described it to him, and he brought me one, which I have hired from him at three shillings a week."—"It is all true," said the prince. "*Ai-wâhi, ai-wâhi*, it is a capital instrument. And such good luck to get it too! But you shall hear it—it is *behisht!* (paradise.) And Timour Meerza, there, is an *oostâde*, a capital musician. He studied it ten years, Wullah! He knows it as a science. *Be-murg-e-tu* — by your death, you must hear him! Timour Meerza, tell the servant to bring the centâra, and let Saheb Fraser hear you play. He will be enchanted."

They had just risen from dinner, and it was time to go to the opera, which was La Somnambula, and in which Grisi and Lablache

played the first parts. All this I represented; but that was nothing. "Patience — time enough!" said the prince. "Sit down for a moment, *ai musselmaun!* What is all the haste? we shall have enough of the opera—sit down!" So the centâra was brought, and down squatted Timour Meerza on the carpet with the instrument before him; and, seizing the quills, he began to play in a style that indicated a perfect acquaintance with it, whatever might be its powers, or the nature of his music. The other princes, taking their seats with infinite gravity, listened to the shrill sounds, as the quills rattled over the wires, with a delight that was truly amusing; but which was shared by Meerza J. who stood drinking them in with equal eagerness.

"There now!" remarked the elder prince, as the music became louder and quicker; "that is the piece which is played with us just before we engage in battle. Who could resist that?" And certainly it was a clangour sufficient to have put many an enemy to flight, especially if lovers of good music. But it rather resembled the jingling of broken pots and pans than the mag-

nificent crash of battle. "This again," said his royal highness, as the measure changed,—"this is a dance; listen to it! Would not that strain make a lame man dance, even if he had never learned it?"—"Ay," said Meerza J. to me in English; "that now is what I call music. *You* may not like it, perhaps; but it gives me more pleasure than twenty operas. Now it is ten years since I have heard this piece before, and during all that time I have been assimilating to your tastes and habits. And I enjoy your fine music too; yet so strong are old feelings and impressions, that none of it moves me like this. Compared with this, it gives me no pleasure. What, then, must your opera airs be to these men who know nothing about it?" The Meerza was quite right; association of ideas gives more than half its value to music. The Italian laughs quite as much at the Highland pibrach as the Highlander does at the clang of the Persian *sáz*. All enjoy their own music more than that of other countries; and, in fact, the effect of what was then being executed was very remarkable. "Ah!" exclaimed the elder prince, after looking long at me with

glowing cheeks and half-shut eyes, "that strain, now, makes a man die with pleasure! *Ghush mee-kuned;* he swoons away on hearing it!" The Wali, unable longer to contain himself, rose abruptly from his seat, and took to walking about, calling out "*Wah! wah! ah-wahi!*" and rolling his eyes and head, and tossing his arms about occasionally, while he ejaculated scraps of poetry and sundry rapturous expressions. So here were Grisi, Lablache, Tambourini, Rubini, and all the attractions of the first opera and singers in the world, despised, abandoned, for the wiry jingle of an old dulcimer, by men to whom one would have imagined the sight and sounds they were engaged to hear would have proved the highest possible treat. Such is the force, however, of early habits and associations; and such the mistakes that men, reasoning from their own impressions, are apt to make with regard to others. It was not, as you have seen, the first time in the course of this duty that I miscalculated thus; nor was it the last.

At length, the dulcimer proving out of tune, they all rose, and to the opera we went. The

*coup d'œil*, on entering, could not fail to please, although all but the eldest had been in the house before. They professed themselves tolerably well satisfied with the music in general; but when I asked the youngest, Timour, how he liked the voice of Grisi, who was accompanying the air she was singing with the most graceful acting, he replied, "The voice is sweet enough, but I would not give those arms and that neck for a dozen of such voices."

"Astonishing!" exclaimed the Wali, at a grand instrumental crash, "how they can make all these hundred musicians strike the same note at once, with such rapid execution, and not one of them miss! This is your European dexterity; it is much more surprising than the music they make. And the piece and entertainment altogether is a thousand times better than any of our plays in Persia; not so much for the sense or the subject, which I do not quite comprehend, as for the splendour of getting-up, and the wonderful apparatus of the whole concern. It is quite perfect. What a pity it is we do not understand a word!" Yet, by taking a good deal of trouble to explain

what was going on, they did comprehend something of the plot of the Somnambula, and abused Elvino bitterly for his savage conduct to their favourite Grisi. They were very nervous during her hazardous transit across the beam from the window of the mill, calling out loudly, "God grant she does not fall!" and were delighted at the reconciliation with which the piece closes. They admired Grisi's figure the more, just because it was not so unnaturally slender, and more substantial than those of most of the young women they saw.

The ballet was Benyousky, and they were much pleased by its brilliancy and action. The dancing was a never-failing source of admiration. They were astonished at the feats of the two chief male and female performers, but were most pleased by the male; for it was obvious that the public indelicacy of display which marks the high opera-dancing, shocked their ideas of propriety far more than it tended to excite their pleasurable emotions. They were thoroughly wearied out by the time all was over; and, on the whole, fatigue and ennui seemed so nearly balanced against pleasure, that

I resolved not to use any inducements to make them go to another opera, but to let the next proposition come from themselves.

The next place of public amusement I took them to was Vauxhall. The illuminated garden, with music in the open air, and the crowds of company passing and re-passing, exhibited some resemblance of Eastern fêtes, and seemed to promise them considerable gratification. Nor was I mistaken. They understood the thing, and therefore liked it—far better, they assured me, than the opera. There was a burlesque farce, in which a skating scene was admirably represented. This delighted Timour Meerza: he actually shouted with laughter; and expressed his joy in a manner that amused the spectators around him nearly as much as the show itself. Then the rope-dancing, so like to their own *bom-bâzee*, but surpassing it, was a great treat; and certainly some of the feats were enough to excite their wonder. The fireworks formed a finale quite after their own hearts. They were thoroughly delighted; and there was something in the whole affair so congenial to their tastes, that they left the place

better pleased than with most of the more refined amusements which had been lavished on them, and declared that they should often return to it.

## LETTER VIII.

WHEN the princes first commenced their London career, it had been proposed that they should see as much as might be possible, during their stay in England, of those objects best calculated to give them an idea, not only of its riches and power, but of the sources from which these are materially derived; thus, a tour through the manufacturing districts was talked of, and a visit to Portsmouth, Chatham, Woolwich, &c. Their own indolence prevented this plan taking effect; and they lost an opportunity of improving themselves, which can probably never occur again.

"It is all very well," the elder would say to me; "but what good will it do to me to look at these great wheels, and to see how they make cloth or thread, while all my poor family are perhaps in want of bread? All we want to do is to settle our business here, and set out on our

return to them. When do you think we may be ready to go?"—"Oh, all in good time, prince," would I reply; "but, in the mean time, have you no curiosity? would you not yourself wish to see some of the great manufactories that furnish the cotton stuffs you wear, and the knives and scissors, and guns and pistols, you are so fond of getting in Persia?"—"Ah, yes, to be sure: well, and how far may they be off? could we go there to-day?"—"It would require two full days to go there, Shahzadeh, and of course two to come straight back; besides which, you could not be less than three days there."—"Wullah! that is a week! and how can we leave London for a week, when so and so, and so and so, is still uncertain? No, no; at present we will remain where we are, and see what is to be seen here." So there was nothing for it but to take them in the humour, and show them such objects as were best worthy of attention within a short range.

Among the things which had awakened their curiosity, were the Thames Tunnel and iron railways. A bridge under water! that was a thing of which they could form no notion; and a steam carriage, running upon a road made of

iron, was not less astonishing. So a party was made to go to the Tunnel and the Greenwich Railway. The drive through the crowded streets which lead to London-bridge, was, of itself, always a treat to them. "For my part," said the prince, more than once as we drove along, "I think the streets and the shops are themselves about the best shows in London: what riches, what an endless variety of goods! one cannot tire of them." And as for Timour, he would have stopped fifty times on the way to gaze at and examine both inside and outside of cutlers', jewellers', and gunsmiths' shops. One day the Wali set himself to count all the carriages that should pass on the one side their coach as it drove along, while Timour reckoned those on the other; and great was their astonishment at comparing notes at the end of a drive from St. Paul's Church-yard to Regent-street. At night, in going out or returning from parties, they were never tired of looking down the long lines of the streets which they passed to right and left, marked out as they were by the seemingly interminable double rows of lamps: it appeared to convey to them a magnificent idea of London.

On the present occasion, having stopped at the house of an artist in the City as we went along, they were much gratified by some of his pictures; and acknowledged the great merit of one which represented the battle of Trafalgar, and was, I believe, about to be presented to his Majesty; although the Wali regarded the subject with a hydrophobic shudder. But I was amused with a remark made, I think, by Timour Meerza: one of the company having praised the execution of the sky in a certain picture, "Ah!" said he, "he must know well how to paint the sky, seeing that he lives so near it;" the studio was at the very top of the house, which was a high one, and the prince had been almost wearied in ascending to it.

Arrived at the Tunnel, they were a good deal struck, and somewhat discomposed, by the deep descent; and eyed the great machine, which was in full operation, with considerable surprise: but I did not see that they were by any means remarkably impressed by the effect of the subterraneous passage itself, to the end of which, however, they went and returned, writing their names in the book of visitors. At first they

seemed scarcely to comprehend that the river was actually flowing, and ships sailing, over them; and, when they did, it awakened rather a sensation of personal fear than of admiration and wonder; for the Wali exclaimed, "Eh! and perhaps it may burst down upon us and drown us! let us be off;" and off they all set, after a very cursory examination of the place.

Having ascended, and refreshed their courage with soda-water and ginger-beer, we drove to the Greenwich Railway, which we mounted, and found the trains of waggons with their engines ready to start. As the passage to Deptford and back, being two miles and a half each way, is performed in ten minutes, I proposed to the elder prince to make the trip, that he might say he had travelled on a railway. He was very shy of venturing, and asked a thousand questions about the danger, probability of accidents, and so forth; but at last, being persuaded to it by his brothers, and having had a place procured for him such as coincided with his notions of dignity, we took our seats and set off. He was very much interested and astonished; and admitted, on returning, that he was glad he had gone.

The questions put by the whole of them were numberless; and those of the Wali evinced, as they always do, a great deal of acuteness: yet, after all, I think they were as much amused at the appearance of a negress, very black indeed, who was standing at a doorway, fashionably clad in white, and wearing a light-coloured silk bonnet.

This evening we dined with Sir G. O., who had invited a very select and distinguished party to meet the princes, among whom were many of the ladies that had shown them attention at public places. The necessity of constant translation is at all times calculated to embarrass conversation; during dinner especially, where the parties must be considerably scattered: yet everything passed off extremely well, particularly in the evening, after the party went to tea and was joined by other visitors; and I wish I could recount to you all the pretty replies that were made to the fair questioners, and the truly oriental compliments which were liberally dealt around. Timour, in particular, attracted great attention; and certainly there is about him, when excited, a joyous *abandon* of manner tempered with a sweetness of tone which is exceedingly winning.

His few words of English too, begin to tell; and he could say to a lady, "*You very purty*," (pretty,) in a very insinuating manner. I was happy to see that this evening they made an exceedingly favourable impression in quarters where it was very desirable they should do so.

This night I became aware, for the first time, of an interesting military exhibition which was to take place in the neighbourhood of Chatham, and which it was thought their royal highnesses would be gratified by witnessing. It was the operation of throwing pontoon bridges over the Medway, and crossing a body of troops with extraordinary rapidity; and some very distinguished persons were to be among the spectators. We had but short time to prepare; but it was arranged that we should start about nine in the morning, with four horses, and post down to the scene of action. On arriving at the hotel, however, the whole arrangement was almost upset by a joyous surprise which there awaited the princes, in the shape of an immense budget of letters from their families, that had just arrived from Baghdad. Their joy was great and tumultuous, for the safe arrival of

the letters proved that the writers must be already in a place of safety; and I left them to enjoy the delight of perusing them at leisure.

In the morning, when I went to the hotel, I found that none of the princes had been in bed. They had sat up all night reading their voluminous correspondence. The news was far more favourable than they had ventured to anticipate. Their wives and families had been liberated by the Shah, without hurt or detriment. To such as chose to take service with him, he had assigned wages according to their several trusts; equal, as they admitted, to the appointments they had received under the Firmaun Firmaee. To others of the women, and younger branches, who remained, pensions had been granted; and those who did not wish to stay in Persia, had been freely permitted to go where they liked. This good news was not quite unmingled. It appeared that a good deal of money had been squeezed out of some members of their family; but when were ears, and noses, and eyes, nay, heads, safe before, under such circumstances, in Persia! Two of Timour Meerza's children had died; a matter which he

appeared to bear with great philosophy, although he said that one was beautiful as the full moon. A brother of the Wali's—that is, by the same mother—was also gone; and a number of princes of the other branches of the royal family had been sent to the state prison at Ardebeel, as these princes rather gratuitously assumed, to be poisoned! On the whole, however, they were well pleased with the contents of their letters, and with the conduct of their cousin the Shah; and the fact of their families having safely arrived at Baghdad had taken a great load of anxiety off their minds. They crowed a good deal at hearing that some of their own enemies, chiefs who had played the traitor to them, had fallen under the king's displeasure, and been handsomely scratched and squeezed by his majesty; and they followed up their triumph by a hope that he would end by shortening them by a head.

To men so occupied, a posting trip of near forty miles out and back, could not come very opportunely, and the prince would fain have given pontoons and all the go-by; but I represented to him that it would be uncourteous not

to accept the offer which had been made to him, and that it was a great pity to miss seeing a display which he might never have another opportunity of beholding. To this he immediately replied,—as indeed he generally does to any serious representation or remonstrance,—"Saheb Fraser says right; Timour Meerza, let us go; the Wali is not very well, and will remain behind and read the rest of these letters." So about half-past nine we started.

Nothing could have turned out much more unlucky than this trip, so far as pleasure was concerned. It was the 1st of July, a hot dusty day, with the wind in our backs; and, although we went through a beautiful country, the minds of the two princes were too much pre-occupied to attend to its charms. We bowled on at a pace so rapid that the motion alone might have prevented weariness of mind, yet they were both done up ere we reached Rochester. Here there was delay for want of horses, so that it was late ere we got to the ground, which was some six or seven miles further up the river Medway. Nor did the arrangements or display, when we reached the scene of operations, re-

compense them, in their opinion, for the fatigue they had undergone. There was no great crowd, no apparently considerable turn-out of troops, and, above all, there was no place or point constructed with seats,—no tent or booth from whence they could view the manœuvre at their ease, and, according to their ideas of propriety, without being themselves exposed either to the heat of the sun or gaze of the crowd; they were not even on horseback, to gallop from place to place in order to see to advantage what might be going on.

In fact, to construct such a station would have been impossible, as the manœuvres were to be repeated at several points where they could only be seen from a little distance; so we had just to do as others did, that is, to sit in our carriage and wait till the show should come our way.

All this was not well calculated to prepare their royal highnesses for appreciating the beauty of a military manœuvre involving no great show, and the nicety of which they were not themselves expert enough to comprehend. The pontoons were indeed rowed nearly to the very spot where our carriage stood; the bridge was

formed, and a regiment of cavalry, with some troops of the line, and a body of artillery, passed it, all in the space of twenty minutes: nothing could be more scientific, or correctly executed. But the princes, out of humour from the first, were quite disappointed. "*Ham-een ust? een che cheezee ust?*—Is this all? is this what it amounts to?" was the remark of the elder, when the movement was completed. "Is it for this you have taken all this trouble, and brought us forty miles from London, and forced us to disappoint poor Moluvee Mahomed Ismael Khan, whom we were to have dined with to-day at six?" "*Eh! cheezee pooch ust*,—it is a paltry affair," echoed Timour; "we can do at least as well as that in Persia."—"Can you?" said I; "as how, prince?"—"Why," replied he, "when we have to cross a river with an army, all we do is to kill a thousand sheep or goats, blow up their skins, form them into rafts, covered with branches of trees and earth, and, *Bismillah!* over we go." It was not the moment to remind them that a thousand sheep are not always at hand, and that wood is very scarce in Persia; that such a work would be the affair rather of days than of

minutes, when time might be of first-rate importance; and that, after all, the fabric would be a frail concern for the transport of a large body, with guns and baggage. They had seen enough, however; so we turned our carriage, and endeavoured to extricate ourselves from the crowd: but this was no easy matter; what with the march of troops, and the slow progress of other vehicles which preceded ours, our four horses were of no use, for we could only crawl. The prince, distressed by a head-ache, lay back, flushed and uncomfortable, in the coach. A lady in a neighbouring carriage, observing this, offered him a bottle of eau-de-Cologne, which he accepted gratefully, intending to use a little and return the rest: but scarcely had he got it, than, an opening occurring in the line, the postilions whipped their horses, and on we drove; so that, to his great distress, he had never an opportunity of returning either the bottle or his thanks to the owner.

At Rochester we were informed that we could have no horses until some of those which were then out should have come in and got rested. Perhaps it was a manœuvre to oblige

us to dine there; if so, it succeeded. Alas! poor Moluvee! no chance now of partaking of his feast; so we solaced ourselves with a bit of fish and cutlet, and a bottle of champagne, at the ——— Inn, Rochester, from whence we did not start till after six o'clock at night. The heat was so severe that the postilions could not at first urge their jaded beasts to the fullest posting speed; the animals could not stand it, a fact of which we soon witnessed a melancholy proof. On the ascent of a hill, a few miles on, we passed a carriage brought to a stand-still by one of the four horses having fallen down from over-exertion; and Timour Meerza, whose practised eye was quite aware of the poor animal's state, at once pronounced that it "had burst," *(trakeéd-ust,)* that is, it was blown to death, and never would rise again. I believe it never did. As the evening advanced, however, and the air cooled, we got on at a better pace; beat the "Tally-ho" coach, to Timour's great delight; and reached the hotel rather before ten at night.

On the succeeding day a party was made for them which promised to afford them greater satisfaction; Major W., who had been long in

Persia, invited them to come and spend the afternoon with him and a party of friends, all more or less conversant with the language, at his house upon the Thames at Putney. We arrived there about five; and the princes were delighted with the situation, the running stream, and the cool freshness of the air. "Vah! Vah!" said they, snuffing it up, and running from flower to flower like bees or butterflies, "who would live in London, with its dust, and its heat, and the eternal whirr! birr! jirr! of its streets, with their thousand carts and carriages, and uproar, when they could come to such a place as this? this is the true spot for a dwelling; here you have the full *Dil-goushâ*—the opening of the heart; one dies of pleasure here." But they preferred looking at the water to going upon it; for, when invited to enter a wherry and enjoy a row up the river a little way before dinner, they shrunk back, and the Wali said, "No, no,—no good, no good,—I no boat, no more boat, no more *Biscay!*" At length, however, they were persuaded to step in; and, after getting over their fears of the boat's upsetting, they could admire the view around them, and the delightful shade

of the trees on either side: then it was that their exclamations of pleasure broke forth; "Ah! there is the spot for us, there, just under these trees: now, a carpet on the grass, and plenty of good wine,—that is the way we should do in Persia; all night there now." They were all for quiet repose, for remaining where they were; and frequently said, "Are we not going too far?" But, when we opened Hammersmith suspension bridge, they were both surprised and charmed: "Ah! you have done well to bring us here," said they; "this was a thing to be seen; let us go close to it, and examine it;" and they did examine the bridge closely, and made many pertinent remarks on its construction, ending in a declaration that, if ever they went back to Persia, they would have such a bridge thrown over the river at Dalakee. They were, however, somewhat astounded and shaken in this noble resolution by hearing the cost of the bridge, and that it was every bit made of iron.

The dinner, to which we now returned, was a most pleasant but a most noisy one; I never heard such a clatter. The great men of Persia, especially the royal family, all speak loud; and

when in spirits, as they were now, there was no control to the exertion of their vigorous lungs. On the other hand, as every one of the company was forced to raise his voice in proportion, in order to be heard at all, and there were at least sixteen of us, you may have some faint conception of the uproar. But it was a very happy party; and the princes left it with regret, I believe, to go to a *soirée* at Countess C.'s, in M—— street, where a small party of the most select society of London were to be assembled.

The princes, in high spirits, appeared to great advantage, and varied their complimentary replies to the many questions that were asked in the most flowery style of the east. "How can we help being enchanted, when we are surrounded by the angels of Paradise?" was the usual return to the often-asked question of how they liked London. But to individuals the compliment was often even yet more direct. "Ask the prince what he thinks of this lady," said Lord B., leading up the beautiful Princess G. to a table where the Wali was standing: the Wali gazing at the fair form through his glittering though half-shut eyes, while a smile of strong

meaning gave a peculiar expression to his face, exclaimed, "She is a Hooree of Paradise, and these are the roses of heaven!" In short, there was no end of fine speeches; and, encouraged by the attention paid them by several of the ladies, they became so animated, and gazed so earnestly on some, particularly of the young ones, that I was too happy when an opportunity for withdrawing them occurred.

It is almost impossible to give you an idea of the uneasiness which I suffered on such occasions, conscious as I am of the comparative coarseness of feeling and ideas that exists in the mind even of the most polished Persian on all that regards females; but imagine the feelings of some fine lady, doomed to chaperone in fashionable company a set of uneducated country misses, by whose *gaucheries* she is continually afraid to be compromised, and you will pretty nearly comprehend mine.

On the 4th of July the princes were invited to one of the Duchess of B.'s splendid morning parties, and to witness a grand rowing-match from the terrace of M—— house, which overhangs the river. It was no easy

matter to get Timour Meerza detached from the gunsmith's shop, where he was superintending some matters of his own; and the eldest excused himself on the plea of indisposition. But at length the two youngest got themselves ready, and away we went. The scene was gay enough to have inspired the dullest with spirits, and the courteous attention of the noble host and hostess would have flattered the most fastidious; while assuredly, had they desired to mingle with and know the first and noblest of the land, their wish must have been gratified here: yet, I know not how it was, they were restless and unsatisfied; asked what was to be done,—what was to be seen. They seemed even not to comprehend the meaning of the boat-race when it came. They would not acknowledge the beauty of several of the most beautiful women in London, who were pointed out to them; and, after walking for a while hither and thither, they sat down quite out of spirits.

I tried them with refreshments, and three glasses of champagne produced a very salutary effect upon the Wali; but Timour Meerza was

quite worn out. He had repeatedly said, "Let us go;" and I was thinking of complying, when a certain lady of his acquaintance made her appearance, and instantly, like a pet dog, he sat down beside her, and commenced a conversation into which, as a matter of course, I was pressed. This lasted for nearly half an hour, during which it is impossible to tell how many fine things were said. "It is long since I have seen you," said the lady; "not since such and such a party: I hope you have been happy all that time." "Oh no," (in broken English,) "I not happy. I no look (see) you; I no happy; I no see you: very bad."—"The flowers I gave you, have you thrown them away?" "No, I keep them next my heart."—"When shall I give you more?" "To-morrow, every day."—"Will you keep a seat for me beside you at ——?" "If there is not one, you shall have mine. My head shall be your footstool!" &c. &c. But at length even this excitement failed; and although the Wali had at length opened his eyes, and acknowledged it to be the finest place he had seen in London, and wanted to stay and examine the beautiful house, with its statues and

other rarities, Timour Meerza was impatient to be back at his dear gunsmith's shop, which assuredly he would not at that moment have given for M—— house and all the galaxy of beauty he left there. So away we drove to Tatham's, where I gladly left them.

## LETTER IX.

In spite of the riches and magnificence, and the signs of wealth and luxury which arrest the attention of all foreigners on their arrival in London, there is one remarkable defect, as it is by them esteemed, which attaches to the metropolis of England; and that is, the want of all appearance of royal state, or of those military and official ensigns of dignity which in almost all other countries mark the seat of government, and indicate the residence of the monarch. The riches and show of London is chiefly that of individuals; there are few emblems of state visible; and it is a custom, which is rather carried to affectation, to conceal all official appearances as much as possible under a plain and simple exterior. There are fewer red coats to be seen in London than in most provincial towns where troops are quartered.

The princes, and ministers, and *noblesse*, of England, though clothed with the highest dignities of the state, are met in the streets or the parks walking or riding like plain unpretending individuals; and as for the royal dwelling, Heaven knows! it would be difficult to find fault with its appearance on the score of excessive splendour.

Now as there is no people, the ruler of which assumes greater state and pomp, or who are so much attracted by outward appearances of power and greatness as the Persians, I was desirous to let these princes be aware, that though we did not lay so much stress upon what they well call the *Lebâs-u-Dowlut*,—the clothes or trappings of the state,—as they do, yet that we had the means, when occasion demanded, of making a show which would keep pace with, if not outshine, all they could boast of. It was in vain that we explained to them that in this country it was not as in Persia, where the king represents not only the government, but the nation,—where all are slaves, whose lives and fortunes are at his will. That here the king was literally the father of his people, with power to rule and punish only according to laws

which gave equal rights to all men; and that therefore his majesty considered himself but as one of the nation, and lived among it as a father does among his children. They said they comprehended all this; but it was evident that something like misconception, if not contempt, attended the ideas they had formed; and I was very desirous to put them right upon the subject. To do this, it was necessary to give them some notion of the manner in which his majesty did really live. There is nothing on which the Persians, and these very princes among them, are given to be so eloquent as on the riches and grandeur of their own monarch,—the style of his living, the number and respectability of his attendants, the splendour of his palaces and their furniture. Now, of these,—having seen all of the sort that had any pretensions to be worth seeing in Persia,—I could speak and judge as well as they; and I knew well that the sight of one of the royal palaces of England, with the establishment annexed to it, must reduce their recollections of their own to a sadly diminished standard. The splendour of Persian palaces consists in quantities of

tawdry gilding, painting, and enamel, with an infinite multitude of little mirrors, inlaid work of glass, painted glass windows, and a whole crystal-shop of lustres, lamps, vases, and fancy ornaments of cut-glass. Nothing more frippery can be imagined; and, although the first effect be rich and glittering, it will not bear inspection. I was therefore anxious that they should see a truly royal palace; and as our gracious sovereign had evinced a great desire that these distinguished foreigners should receive every possible attention, it was arranged that Windsor should be shown to them. But, as circumstances prevented the king receiving them in person, a day was selected when his majesty was absent in London.

On the day appointed, accordingly, we got under weigh a little before nine in the morning; and, taking up Sir G. O., proceeded on our way with all the comforts of an easy carriage and four. The air, cooled by the last night's rain, was delicious; and, the distance not being great enough to occasion weariness of mind, the princes enjoyed their drive very much. Entering the great gate, the carriage drove at once

into the fine court of the castle, the appearance of which is very imposing; and the order in which every thing is kept, so very opposite to the slovenly state of even royal courts in Persia, made its due impression on my charges.

At the entrance we were met by Sir A. Barnard and Sir J. Wyattville, who did the honours to their royal highnesses; and we soon proceeded to view the castle. The great hall of St. George, one of the grandest apartments that can be imagined, met with but languid applause; the princes did not comprehend its beauties: but the armoury beyond was more admired, although Timour objected very much to the form and unwieldiness of the ancient spears, and could not imagine how men with their faces covered with armour could fight at all.

The tapestry in the next suite excited their applause still more; and when informed that these pictures were all done by needlework, or *woven*, as they expressed it, they could not contain their astonishment. "This is more wonderful," said they, "than anything we have seen yet,—more wonderful than London!" meaning

the Panorama of London at the Coliseum, which till then had been their standard of the wonderful and excellent.

The library gave them little pleasure,—they gave it the general expression of their satisfaction which the whole received; but the state drawing-rooms called forth their most unqualified admiration. They were astounded at their richness. "Nothing can be found to surpass this," was their reply to my question of how they liked them; "magnificence can go no higher." But their surprise and delight were at their height at being taken through the private apartments, with their exquisite furniture both useful and ornamental; and the great gallery, with its pictures and infinite and most gorgeous contents. Some of the granite and malachite vases were greatly admired; but I am not certain that a fine old cabinet of carved black wood, with very rich and ingenious fitting-up, did not surprise and please them as much as anything. The plate, particularly the gold service, made a strong and palpable impression on them, as was to be expected from so large a visible mass of precious materials; but their

fancy was most attracted by the humai, which had once hovered over the head of Tippoo Sultan, and the gold and jewelled tiger-head footstool of that monarch, which were also in the plate-room.

But that which gave them far more gratification than all the splendour and magnificence they had seen, was the gracious and most kind attention of her majesty the queen, who met them, as it were, by chance, attended by some of her ladies, in one of the suites, and remained to receive their salutation and honour them with her notice. Her majesty addressed to the princes several inquiries, and remained for a considerable time conversing regarding them with Sir G. O. It was a kindness as well bestowed as delicately paid; for their royal highnesses left her majesty most deeply impressed with gratitude, and with a sense of her goodness and benevolence.

When our inspection of the castle was finished, we all partook of a luncheon, provided for the princes, which they washed down with excellent champagne. After which the party proceeded in two of the royal carriages, very attentively

provided for the purpose, to drive through the park. On the way we stopped to examine the beautiful church, the exquisite carved wooden work of which excited much admiration. Indeed, I have remarked, on more than one occasion, that this sort of ornament has attracted more notice from them than work in richer materials. But they were very strongly impressed by the monument to the late lamented Princess Charlotte, whose story called forth many expressions of sorrow, for they remembered having heard of it in Persia; and they fully entered into the sculptor's idea of the soul escaping towards heaven from the mortal remains which lie mute and motionless below. They had been, also, pleased with the statue of George the Fourth, which stands on the landing-place of the great staircase; but were not a little confounded at hearing of its price, (£4,000,) which, turned into Persian tomauns, appeared to them an enormous sum.

In driving through the noble park, which it might have been thought would have kept all their attention alive, they evinced little pleasure. Their minds were, in fact, fatigued; and the good meal they had made weighed down

their bodies, so that the Wali fairly wrapped himself in his cloak and went to sleep; nor did he wake until, reaching the lake, he was roused by the cackling of the geese and other water-fowl. On pausing to look at the cascade, he remarked that in his government of Bebahan there were many such things, and that the country very much resembled that they were driving through; a remark which affords a specimen of his correctness of observation in such things. But the recollection roused him, so that he was ready to be pleased with the view looking over Virginia Water from the Saluting battery, where we halted.

It was with the fishing station, however, the Chinese house and the tents, and the sweet shaven lawn and gardens, that they were most enchanted. "Ah!" exclaimed the eldest, "this is what we Persians delight in; here are our own roses! Look, Wali, look, Timour Meerza —just see here! *Ai-Wahi, ai-Wahi!* The smell goes to my very heart;" and away they all ran, and hurried from bush to bush, petting each rose as if it were a living favourite. "Ah! now is just the time when we should be coming

out from the *anderoon*, to sit upon the green grass and take our wine. Here we should have the *sáz*, (musical instruments,) and there we should seat ourselves. Come, Saheb Fraser; come here, and sit down Persian fashion!" and down squatted the prince without more ado, pulling me down after him. "Alas! alas!" chimed in the Wali; "just so did I use to do in the jungles of Bebaban, when I was taking an army of fifteen thousand foot and five thousand horse against the Buchtiarees. *Ai-Wahi!* how the day did pass! And then we would get a lamb or a kid, and cut him up upon the spot, and have such kebaubs. *Behisht!* it was paradise!"

"Yes, prince," said I; "and while all this was going on,—while the very bit was in your mouth,—up come a parcel of these same Buchtiarees in your rear to trouble your repast; then where go your fine kebaubs, and your feast, and your *khoosh-goozeranee*—your light-hearted enjoyment?" "*Ah! be-jehannum;* all to the d—l!—then it is sword in hand, and fight for it. But what then? Such a country! such fruits! such grapes! you might then have had as much as an ass could carry of the finest

*askeree* (stoneless, or sultana) grapes for two-pence. I was once encamped with ten thousand men in a place—such a place! but it was an enemy's country, where it was our duty to destroy things, you know;—and destroy we did. How every man revelled in grapes! he gave them to his horse, he trampled them under foot; and we stayed there many days. *Wullah! billah!* by all that is good, when we left it you would have said that, except just where we stood, there had not been a bunch touched."

Their delight with the noble trees and rich verdure of this magnificent park, and the expression of their admiration, once awakened, continued throughout the rest of our drive: yet I was not sorry when we returned to the castle, where a most comfortable repast of tea and refreshments gave rest to mind and body, as well as strength for the journey home; for, what with exercise and excitement, they were quite exhausted.

Liqueurs were offered, and I accepted them for the princes; for the Wali had already observed, that the *keyf*, or excitement of the champagne, had gone off, and left behind the

listlessness of collapse. I recommended him a glass of the liqueur. "Has it *keyf?*" said he. "Try," replied I. He took it accordingly; and in a quarter of an hour after he turned to me, with a countenance of infinite complacency, and said, "You were right; it has keyf, and has done me good."

At half-past six we took leave of our most kind entertainers in the palace, and had a very pleasant drive home, during which the princes were very communicative; and many were the observations regarding all that they had seen, and comparisons between its grandeur, and the palaces and pleasures of their own country: all of which, if I could have remembered and recorded it, would not be without its interest; but, like many other matters, it passed away without my being able to commit it either to memory or to paper.

On the following day, the 7th of July, we had three evening engagements, — to Astley's with a party of their friends, to a private party, and to a ball: fortunately, we had a clear forenoon. It was with "mickle toil" that the Meerza and myself got them to sit down to

dinner at half-past four, as we were engaged to be at the house of Sir G. O. at half-past five: but to make them eat, was beyond our power; the eldest swore he was not hungry, and could not. "It is not every one who has got his appetite in his hand like you," said he to me, as he saw me doing justice to the good viands even at that unusually early hour. We kept our appointment, however, to within a quarter of an hour; and the party, a large one, having assembled, we all went merrily to the theatre.

We had all expected a good deal of amusement from seeing the impression of the remarkable performances at Astley's upon the princes; and Mr. Ducrow, having been informed of their intention to "honour the amphitheatre with their presence," had engaged to do his best; yet at first we were disappointed. The piece represented was Lalla Rookh, which, though brilliant and bustling, did not greatly elicit their admiration. They laughed contemptuously when told that all this was meant to represent scenes in India and Khorasan, and in their own country, the south of Persia; and scarcely seemed to enter

into the little spirit which the piece really has. We thought that the horsemanship which it contains would be attractive; but, when the horses did make their appearance, their movements were cramped and constrained, and the fighting was so miserably tame that it must have been consummately ridiculous in the eyes of men who had seen plenty of the reality: there never was anything so absurd as the cool *poke* of a spear by which Prince Feramurz disposes of his rival, the Tartar hero. The tableaux, representing the acceptance of the Peri's offering, and the *dénouement* of the story of the Veiled Prophet, though fair enough in themselves, were strangely foisted into the piece, and perfectly unintelligible to the princes. It was only at the last, when a skirmish was conducted with something more of bustle and vigour, and one or two persons were struck down, that Timour Meerza was roused from his contemptuous apathy, and called out, "Hah! *Barikillah!* that was well done, that is something like the thing; it puts me in mind of my own work in Iran."

But the scene changed, when the rope-dancing and tumbling commenced. That was excellent

of its kind, and the princes were delighted; I thought the youngest would have split his sides with laughing at the imitation of the Bedouin Arab tumblers, which certainly was most extraordinary. "*Wullah!* that cannot be a child that they are twisting so about? it is surely a make-believe child," said he aloud, as he was gazing at the incomprehensible movements of a most astonishing human being, scarcely beyond the period of infancy; and I shall not easily forget the expression of mingled amazement and amusement which his countenance exhibited when he became convinced of the creature's reality. "And what, in the name of goodness, is this going to be?" said he, as two of the rope-dancers appeared behind a crescent among opening clouds at the further end of the stage. His question was answered by their walking up certain ropes that were fixed to the upper gallery, till they reached it far above the heads of the audience; and then, retreating backwards to whence they came, were hid from view in real clouds of smoke and fire from a great discharge of fireworks. The horrible smell which these, united with the gas, produced, turned many of the ladies half-

sick, and made all hold their noses or have recourse to smelling-bottles. I remarked this to Timour Meerza, who was sitting just before me with the glow of delight still bright on his countenance, and asked him whether he did not dislike the smell. "*Tcha ha!*" exclaimed he, "what should make me care about it? It may be bad for these ladies, who do not know what gunpowder is; let them take lavender-water; I like it. But it is villanous bad gunpowder too," added he, a moment after, as he snuffed up the infernal mixture of gases, with a grimace which showed that it touched even his organs of sense in a manner which was anything but pleasant.

The horsemanship gave them quite as much delight: but, of all the feats performed, I think they were most pleased with the dancing of a lady and her horse, which first waltzed with her on its back, in good time, to the tunes that were played, and then danced to her on foot, setting and *vis-à-vis*ing away at a great rate as she directed its movements with a whip. They came away declaring that the show was altogether a right good one; and the discussions which fol-

lowed regarding these wonderful riders, and the speculations as to whether they could perform in fair field the same feats which they executed in the theatre, convinced me that the impression produced was in reality a strong one. But they were, as usual, so exhausted by their excitement, that they insisted upon having tea at Mivart's, before proceeding to Lady T. R.'s evening party; and the elder prince, in spite of its being the *Shub-e-jumah*, or evening preceding their week's holiday, (Friday,) on which they never like to drink wine, ordered a bottle of champagne to wind them up for what was yet to come.

The constitutional difference, both moral and physical, between Orientals and Europeans, would form a curious subject of speculation. In their physical conformation, although they seem capable of undergoing nearly or quite as much bodily fatigue as Europeans, it would also seem that their strength is more of a passive than an active character. The European has more firmness and rigidity of fibre with which to struggle; the Oriental more flexibility of muscle and adaptation to endure. The for-

mer has a strong hold of life, tugs hard to retain it, and parts with it difficultly. In the latter, life seems more loosely bound up with his earthy tabernacle, and is easily shaken out of it. Yet he escapes by yielding to the blast, and offering less stubborn opposition, where the other would be torn up. Thus, in the physical conformation of each, there are qualities which compensate for their respective deficiencies, or nearly so; but in the mental constitution this is less obvious. The Oriental is, indeed, more quick and apt at inquiry than the European: but he seems to want the solid basis on which to fix those acquirements; and, above all, he is far more subject to mental languor, and cannot endure a long exertion of the intellect, whether for painful or pleasurable objects. Of course, I speak in a very general sense, and without reference to the degrees and shades which are occasioned by difference of nation, climate, customs, and other operating causes, and only state what appears to me the fact; and which—to return to the subject which occasioned this digressive flight—accounts for the inferior powers of enduring a long continuance of even plea-

surable excitement, which I have remarked in these princes. Let us also now proceed to Lady T. R.'s.

We reached M——d-street late, and the greater part of the company had already departed; but they met with a very kind reception, and the two younger soon ensconced themselves on sofas, with some of the most attractive young ladies by their side. The elder remained conversing in a more general way with that part of the company who were standing near him. It was interesting to observe how the progress in knowledge of English customs displayed itself in the introductions to new acquaintances, which constantly occurred. They had remarked that shaking hands was one of our modes of salutation, yet had not become aware of the degree of familiarity it implied. So, whenever a lady, young or old, was presented, the hand was immediately proffered, and the new friend, particularly if fair and attractive, urged with courteous look and gentle force to take her seat beside them. In Persia, to be asked by a prince to sit in his presence is a high distinction; but to sit by his

side is the height of honour; so that the intention was at least kind and courteous, however strangely it might seem expressed to our country-women. Then began the intercourse of broken words and signs, and a shower of compliments, not always well selected, which it was very difficult to translate in such a manner as to maintain a suitable degree of delicacy, and yet retain the original meaning or allusion. Often enough was I at my wits' end to do this; and the repetition of this exertion, night after night, was so tiresome as quite to destroy the interest which an unconcerned bystander would doubtless have taken in what was going on.

But the pleasure-seeking duties of the night were not yet at an end; the princes had engaged to go to a ball at Lady B. P.'s in Cumberland-street, and about midnight we arrived there. The rooms were crowded to excess, and it was with much difficulty that we fought our way through the living mass to a little room at the end of the suite, which at that time had not half a dozen persons in it, and was comparatively cool and pleasant. "Ah! this will do for you, prince," observed I to him, as

When the Wali's new acquaintance, Mrs. L. S., rose from her seat to go, he looked after her for some time with his keen little grey eyes, which, like his whole countenance, were radiant with pleasure; and then, turning to his elder brother, "*Dâdaish*" (their familiar name for their elder and superior brother,)—"*Dâdaish*," said he, "what would Moollah —— say if he were here to-night?"—"Who is Moollah ——?" asked I. —"Oh! Moollah —— is a Sheerauzee," replied the Wali, "who loves to look at beautiful women, the old villain! Do you remember, *Dâdaish*, how he used to make his wives ask all the women of their acquaintance to the house, and hide himself in the balcony of the reception-room, and look down upon them as they sat and amused themselves? *Wullah!* if he were here, he would faint! Even we, who are used to see crowds of the finest women, what an effect has it upon us! *Wullahi Billahi!* it is enough to take away our senses; come, let us be going." And go we did; and, after pushing our way through the crowd we soon got into the carriage, worn-out and weary enough.

## LETTER X.

On the 8th, the princes were entertained by Lord G. who had a distinguished party to meet them. The conversation was very animated; and, as there were two persons who could interpret besides myself, it was well maintained by all the three. It chanced that I sat next to Timour Meerza, whose genius being all for field sports and war, the conversation at this part of the table naturally took that turn. The story of his killing the lion at Shahpore, in the king's presence, was mentioned; and from thence arose some observations on the difficulty of taming lions, and the danger of keeping them as pets. "I had a strong proof of that myself," said Timour; "for I had once a pet lion, which I kept till it was between two and three years old. It was quiet enough, because it got enough to eat: but, having heard that no lion can bear

to be disturbed while at food, I was determined to try the experiment; and one day, when it was eating, I went and caught it by the tail and drew it away from its meal. The lion turned round in a great passion, whisked his tail out of my hand, and tried to get a hold of me with his teeth. I got him by the throat to preserve myself, and then we began a wrestling match. He got me under, and I began to think it was all over with me, but I still kept my gripe of his throat, and that began to tell; for, when he was half strangled, he fell, and I got on the top of him, and began to kick and beat him as well as I could. There was luckily a stick within reach, and, getting hold of it, I belaboured him till I was tired and he was completely cowed; and ever from that time he knew his master, and trembled when he saw me, whether at meals or not." The animation with which he told this curious story, which was done with a simplicity that vouched for its truth, gave great amusement to his hearers, and I wished it had been possible for them to have understood the full point of all he said; but he

was so voluble when excited that no translator could keep pace with him.

His hunting anecdotes were numberless, and it put one in mind of the days of old to hear him describe a *chasse*, where three or four thousand men were turned out to hunt the wild-boar; where a whole district was driven, as in the chase of the deer, by our own ancient kings or powerful barons; where three hundred boars and sows were slaughtered, and ninety out of four hundred dogs, with some score of men, were killed in the attack. He described a day's sport in a plain near Kerman, where a prodigious number of antelopes were assembled; and he and another prince, his cousin, took out a thousand horsemen to pursue them. There had been a great rain, so that the soil of the plain was converted into mud, to such a depth that the slender legs of the antelope stuck and entangled the animal, while the more vigorous and longer limbs of the horse bore him through it: the consequence was a great slaughter; many hundreds of deer were put to death, so that the whole army were fed with venison; and they

desisted from the carnage as much from remorse as from weariness.

Another of his anecdotes was of a different description; but I do not recollect whether it was on this day he told it; nor is it so much to his credit, though strongly characteristic of his countrymen, and of the savage impatience of the young Kajar princes. Devoted to the chase, he was passionately fond of all that belonged to that amusement, particularly of horses, dogs, and hawks. Of the last he had many favourites of all descriptions. One day he was hawking the mountain partridge, somewhere near Sheerauz, and had flown a very favourite Gos-Hawk at one of these animals, which was crossing a ravine. The hawk had struck the partridge, and was coming with it to the ground, when Timour heard a rush, and saw a dark body borne through the air from behind him. It was a huge black eagle, which had been sitting on a crag above; and which made a stoop, and, trussing both hawk and partridge at once, bore them away in its talons to a neighbouring height across the ravine. In vain the prince shouted and hallooed, the eagle

kept its prize; and when the prince, and such of his people who were near, reached the place where the eagle had been sitting, they found but the head of the poor hawk, and part of her golden ornaments.

Timour was in a dreadful rage, and swore to be revenged,—to make the eagle pay dearly for his dinner that day; so, calling for the chief huntsman and hawk-keeper, he gave orders to search the country for the murderer, and to take him alive, cost what it might, and bring him to the presence. Accordingly the country was turned out, this great black eagle watched, his haunts discovered; and, in due time, his aërial majesty was brought, tied feet and wings, to the presence of his judge. The prince happened to be seated at a feast, or rather at a drinking party, with some of his brothers and cousins. These drinking parties are, as I have before observed, no joke; the quantity of wine and of spirits drunk is enormous, and the excesses often committed in consequence are proportionally gross. I do not remember exactly how the murderer was identified; I think it was by some of the unfortunate hawk's gear

found in or near his haunt: be that as it may, the first thing they did was to pour wine and spirits down its throat, till it was as drunk as they. The next day, when similarly engaged, the prince ordered in the furoshes, who, putting the poor bird's feet in the *felleck*, like a person who is to receive the bastinado, beat it till all its claws were broken and bloody. I will not proceed to describe the process by which, night after night, it was tortured and destroyed piece-meal, until at length death put an end to its sufferings: but Timour Meerza told the whole story with a glee that showed he only thought he had been exacting a suitable revenge for an irreparable injury.

After dinner the conversation turned upon their journey to London, which gave the princes an opportunity of describing their sufferings at sea. Something was then said about providing a passage for them on their return by a better vessel, which drew from the Wali a sarcastic remark, that no doubt, if the English government desired to get rid of them altogether, such would be the very way to do it; as another such voyage would certainly termi-

nate their sufferings and their lives: the intentions, therefore, of their English friends would be known, he said, by such a proposition. All this only confirmed what I felt assured of from the first, that they never would voluntarily trust themselves again on salt-water.

July 9th.—Whether it arose from lassitude attendant upon the continual excitement of the nights, or the strong constraint of original habit, the princes became still more indolent than at first during the day. The elder retired to his room regularly after breakfast, and employed himself in some trifling sedentary amusement. The Wali went fairly to bed: Timour alone kept the drawing-room, where he sat trying to copy engravings, in order to teach himself to draw, or flirted occasionally with some of the females of the house; but his favourite resort was the gunsmith's shop. This day, when I called with the intention of taking them to the Diorama, I found the Wali sound asleep; the elder prince engaged in looking over plans and estimates for a forcing-pump which he wanted to take out to Nejeff, to supply that holy place with water; and Timour preparing

for his favourite haunt. Thither I accompanied him, and he remained nearly an hour trifling and playing with sundry pistols and swords, and revelling in the sight of the number of those instruments that were placed before him. It was with difficulty I got him at last to the Diorama, where we arrived just at the time when the church of Santa Croce was represented as at midnight; and it was so dark, that our unaccustomed eyes could perceive nothing. The prince was taken all by surprise. "Tcha-ha! what sort of a show is this?" said he, as he stumbled to a seat by the help of some of the attendants. "I am blind surely, not a thing do I see; what is the meaning of this? are there people near us? I hear voices, but I can't discover the speakers." In fact, it was not until the gradual change represented in the picture threw light upon the subject, and our optics had adapted themselves to the darkness, that we were able to make out the church. The prince had but just time to comprehend the scene, and to express his astonishment at the optical deception,—for he was aware that it was but a pic-

ture,—when the bell rung, and the church was slowly hid from our view by the revolving of the machinery.

A new source of wonder was now revealed: the curtain rose, and discovered the valley of Sarnin deep in snow, and the village of Alagna sleeping in the calm moonlight; it was a scene wonderfully true to nature. A storm came on, —the wind arose, we heard it whistle,—heard the roar of the avalanches,—saw the morning break, and disclose the catastrophe of the night —the destruction of the village. The prince was amazed, as well he might be. "A *little* show do you call this?" said he; "you promised me a little show, and this is the finest and most wonderful you have yet taken me to. *Afereen! Afereen!* this cannot be a picture; it must be reality!" In the same manner was he delighted with the illumination in the church; and the mysterious appearance and disappearance of the congregation struck him with so much amazement that he knew not what to say; and he left the place declaring that this was the most astonishing thing he had yet witnessed of all the London wonders.

On coming out of the Diorama I wished to show him a little of the country, and ordered the carriage to Hampstead; but I had often cause to remark how little they were struck by what we consider rich and attractive scenery, and such was the case to-day: before we were half-way to the heath Prince Timour became sleepy, and requested that the carriage should take him home. So home he went.

Next day, July 10th, the princes were entertained by Sir J. H. and met at his house with a very delightful party, among whom they very soon found themselves at home. Indeed, they had now become so much accustomed to the usages of English society as to have lost a good deal of the constraint which at first they could not but feel, though far from having caught the spirit of our manners, so as to put me at perfect ease regarding their behaviour in all cases. They were this day all pleasantly placed, and kept their interpreters fully employed; although with little more than a repetition of the questions, answers, and compliments that had been used on a dozen other occasions.

The elder prince, who was seated beside an ex-

ceedingly pretty and agreeable young lady, became more animated than usual, and was, I am convinced, very sincere in his expressions of admiration. He requested to know the lady's name, and, being told it was Charlotte, he said, "I know three Charlottes then, but you are preferable to them all."

In the evening the party was increased, and there was some excellent music; and Miss H. V. the young lady admired by the prince, sang some delightful airs. The Wali and Timour sat themselves down close by the instrument, and listened with the greatest attention; but the fair singer herself was far more the object of attraction than the music, for, on my asking the former how he liked the air she was singing, he plied, "*Khoodish khylee behtur ust*, —'she herself is far better;" and both of them declared that she was "full of salt,"— i. e. of that beauty of expression so valued by them. They then got to a table, and began to write scraps of poetry for several of the company who desired to have such memorials; and found themselves so much at home, that there was scarce any getting them away, although they had an evening engage-

ment at the house of the Wali's friend, Mrs. L. S. It was near midnight when they arrived there; and an active flirtation was kept up with several both of old and new acquaintance for an hour or more, after which we all gladly retreated to our homes.

July 11.

Engagements were now so abundant that the princes might have been every night at three or four parties; but this they were not up to, and to most invitations they sent excuses. This night, however, they went to a small and select party at the Countess of E.'s, where they met many of their lady acquaintances, and soon got each comfortably seated with their own little circle around them. This was just what they liked, and they only wanted language to render them completely happy. One lady, and a very delightful person, singular enough to say, had picked up a little Persian, and the elder prince insisted on entertaining her. Lady D. S. endeavoured to make the Wali reply to her questions; and Timour, after a little general flirtation, attached himself to Miss R. an exceedingly pretty and lively young lady,

who responded with spirit to his gallant demonstrations, so that the poor interpreters had again a sore time of it. The compliments flew thick, and home ones many of them were. "Ah!" said Miss R. in reply to some fine thing which Timour had said, "tell him he is too full of compliments; I fear he is nothing else."—"By your own head, and by my death!" said he earnestly, "nothing of the sort — what would you have? I only say what I think, and that is the truth. If I were to say you were *not* beautiful; that your eyes were *not* superb, and your mouth *not* lovely; that you were *not* full of expression and animation,—would it be truth? You know it would not. I say what I say, because so it is." Of course, there was no resisting such a protestation; and the complimentary truths of Prince Timour were graciously, though laughingly, accepted.

This young lady having retired, the young man, whose laughter and good-humour had attracted much attention, was next surrounded by three or four ladies, who all besieged him with questions. "What is he laughing at?" said one of them, seeing the prince smile at

something which had been said and interpreted to him. "What can I do but smile," said he, "surrounded as I am by such beauties—such houries of paradise? must I not be pleased? If you want me to look grave, or to cry, set me among old and ugly women, if there be any such to be found; you will see no laughing then."—"Oh! then," said a middle-aged, but still very pretty woman, "if that is the case, I must keep away; I don't want to see you cry; we old ones must not approach you."—"Old!" said he, looking earnestly at the lady, "not a bit of you; on the contrary, you are very pretty, and you know you are so! Why do *you* say you are old?" At which there was another laugh, and then more compliments; and so the evening fared on till it was time to hie homewards.

## LETTER XI.

July 13.—THE princes have agreed to sit to Mr. Partridge, the well-known artist, for their pictures. When the proposal was made, I questioned whether they would agree; but to my comfort, as it proved, not only were they pleased at the idea, but have taken a great fancy for going over and sitting with Mr. Partridge, which is of much service in dissipating, in an easy way, the ennui which they feel, and which they have not spirits or energy enough to drive away by going out to see the various objects of curiosity which merit their attention in London. The sketches of two of the princes have already been made, and excellently characteristic and spirited they are.

The princes had been invited by her royal highness the Duchess of Kent to attend her evening party at Kensington this night; but, in

order to pass the forenoon, I asked them to go and look at one or two exhibitions. The elder prince excused himself; but the Wali and Timour Meerza accepted the proposal, and off we drove. Remembering the delight of the former at seeing the wax figures in the hair-dressers' shops, I took them first to Madame Tussaud's wax-works, nor was I disappointed in the effect which I expected this would produce. On entering the room, the first figures that struck the eye were Fieschi and his infernal machine on the right-hand, and Sir Robert Peel on the left; the first they passed without notice, supposing him to be one of the attendants of the room engaged in some work or other. The attitude of Sir Robert arrested their attention; but it was not till approaching, and asking who he was, that their doubts were awakened: they started back with a stare of astonishment and hesitation; "What! is it not a man? *Ullah!* what story is this? *een che cheezee ust?*" and they stood gaping and looking, first at the figure, and then around them. "*Ullah-hu-akber!*—God is great! and this too," turning to Fieschi, "perhaps this is not a man neither? Oh yes, it is; but he does not move.

What is he doing? *Ullah! Ullah!*" I permitted it to work, and they got half frantic; they looked into and examined each figure, and each was a new subject of wonder and inquiry: they could not believe their own eyes when they were told that the eyes which stared on them from the wax were not real. They walked about, and then stood still and looked around them, as if constantly expecting something to happen,—as if the figures should start into life and destroy the illusion.

They were greatly struck with the first large group, representing the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor Alexander, Napoleon, Duke of Wellington, &c. at Shoenbrunn, I believe: but the common and single figures, such as Hare and Burke, I think, surprised them yet more; the illusion in these was more perfect. They were much delighted with the beauty of Mary Queen of Scots, and with the figure of a sleeping child, and a few others; but the one of all others which astonished and even startled them most was the figure of old Madame Tussaud herself, who stands, "spectacles on nose," at the feet of a sleeping figure in black. This sleeping lady

first attracted their notice, and, on looking up, they observed Madame T. apparently watching them; but, taking her for a living person, they paid her no attention; when, a recollection of their first error coming across the Wali's mind, he looked again, and perceiving her perfect stillness, he went up, examined it, and cried out, "And this too is not a living creature! *Ullah-hu-akber!*"

On quitting the place the Wali said, "Now, let us play *Dádaish* a trick: we are to go and see the *Malikeh* (the princess) to-night; let us take him here first, and tell him this is the Malikeh's *durbar*,—*Wullah!* he will believe it; it is like magic. *Murg-e-tu!*—by your death! by the head of the prince!" continued he, turning to me with great earnestness, "let us do this; don't laugh, keep your countenance, and you will see sport." I promised acquiescence, and away we next went to show the Wali the Diorama, which, though now familiar to Timour Meerza, was new to the other; and the former enjoyed by anticipation the effect on his brother.

We entered, as before, when the church re-

presented midnight. "What is the use of this?" said the Wali, after rubbing his eyes for a few minutes; "this is no show; I am choked here; come, let us go!"—"Have patience for a while," we said; and soon the artificial illumination began to appear. "What is all this?" said the Wali; "are these candles?"—"To be sure," said we; "and don't you see the *mujlis* (assembly or congregation) in chairs sitting there?" He pulled out his little opera-glass, and saw them. "And how far now," said I, "should you think it may be from where you sit, to that door there, at the bottom, where you see the light?"—"What can I say?" replied he; "perhaps one hundred paces, —at least that." He was confounded to hear that it was not more than eight or ten, and still more so when told that all he saw was merely the effect of colours on a flat surface. "*Ullah-hu-akber!*" exclaimed he, "it is impossible! And if I were to throw this orange at that door now, would it hit the curtain?"—"Certainly," said I. He replied only with a bewildered groan, and muttered in a whining voice, "*Cheme dánum!*—What do I know!"

His astonishment did not diminish when

the darkness recommenced; and afterwards, when the dawn of morning discovered the church empty and the figures gone, the deception, in point of space, was greater in the grey cold morning light than before, and his bewilderment was proportionally great. The black curtain, which now hangs before each picture, and conceals it until the circular movement of the machinery has brought the spectator full in front, is a great improvement on the former mode, by which the pictures came awkwardly and sideways before him; yet the first view of the village did not appear to strike the Wali much. But as the night wore on, and the wind whistled, the snow fell, the lights went out, and the avalanches roared, he became highly excited, and evinced a full feeling of the wonderful reality of the thing. He could not, indeed, very well comprehend the need of the great obscurity that overwhelms the whole scene; but was very much delighted with the appearance of morning, which comes on with a wonderful truth of colouring and effect. "And where is the village?" said one of the princes. "Under the ice," replied one of the Persian servants behind, who had accom-

panied us into the place: "and look! there is the *kell-e-minar*,—(the *skull*, or head of the steeple)—left alone above it."—"Ah!" observed another of the servants; "look at these planks, how admirably they are done."—"Done!" repeated the other, "they are wood, nothing else; I swear it is wood."—"Well," said the Wali, drawing a long breath as we left the place, "this beats even the picture of London; this is a show worth seeing: have you any more like this to show us?"—"Ay, prince, a dozen of sights as good, if you would only sleep less, and rouse yourself to go and see them."—"It can't be true," said he; "there can be nothing more so good as this."

I dined with them to-day, that I might keep them in order as to time; and the two younger ones were full of anxiety for the success of their intended joke. Accordingly, a little after eight, out we sallied, the elder prince in the full assurance that he was about to be presented to the veritable Princess Victoria, future Queen of England. The wax-work exhibition is lighted up every evening, the knowledge of which, in fact, first suggested the idea of the joke, and the room is spacious and good; but I must own that the

entrance did not much savour of the splendour of royalty, nor would the bills of Madame Tussaud have appeared to practised eyes as perfectly suitable *affiches* to the gates of an English princess, any more than the drawings of soda-water and effervescing lemonade bottles, and the rows of bottles themselves, could be held apposite appendages to the table of her ante-room. Past these, however, we hurried his royal highness, and on we went. I ran up-stairs as if to announce their arrival; in fact, to pay the admission money. The prince thought that all was properly prepared, and followed without demur. The entrance to the drawing-room was certainly somewhat of the strangest; but he passed it, nothing doubting, or at least nothing saying. The blaze of lights within, and the number of living and moving figures intermingled with those of wax, aided the deception, although they were not exactly such either in garb or appearance as were likely to frequent the chambers of kings; but we hurried him through the glittering moving scene to the group which represents the coronation of our gracious sovereign, William the Fourth. "There — there is the king him-

self!" said I; "make your obeisance there:" and the poor bewildered prince was in the act of making the *serferoo*, or usual bow made to royalty, when I stopped him. It was enough; to have gone further would have been inexcusable: and his brothers, who had remained behind, now coming up, and laughing, a full explanation took place, which at first he hardly knew how to receive; but at length, after good-humouredly abusing me for the trick, he laughed with the rest, and began to examine the show, which he had been so unexpectedly cheated into seeing.

It was then a re-acting of the morning scene; but his astonishment at the figure of Madame Tussaud was past all control: like his brothers, he started at seeing the spectacles so immoveably fixed on the old nose, and, after eyeing it humorously for a while, he walked round it in a semicircle, like a magpie round a trap, as if still expecting it to move. "It *is* a living thing," said he at last; "but no, it has no motion. *To khodah*—what is it?" and going very gingerly up to it, he put forth his hand and touched the cheek; then retreating, "It *is* wax," said he, and was

going away as if satisfied apparently: but a lingering doubt, which, however, he was ashamed to betray, brought him slyly back, as we went on; and, on turning, we saw him go up with a more determined air, and take hold of the little finger: "*Belli*—yes," said he, on seeing himself detected, "it really is wax." All the people in the room had clustered around us while this scene was going on, and their amusement at the poor prince's uncertainty was excessive.

At length the show was over,—all had been admired; we regained our carriage and drove to Kensington, where we arrived, just in proper time, at the true palace. The princes were received at the top of the staircase by Sir John Conroy and Sir Gore Ousely, and conducted at once into the room where sat her royal highness the Duchess of Kent, and the Princess Victoria, with a brilliant company already assembled. The princes were most graciously received; and to the hopes that were kindly expressed, of their having found their stay in England agreeable, the elder replied by declaring himself for ever grateful for all the kindness they had met with; but added, that it was now only he was sensible

how long he had been in darkness, since his eyes had only now received the light. Several times in the course of the evening did their royal highnesses come forward and address to the princes some kind remark; and it was very gratifying to myself, as to the rest of their friends, to observe that the impression they made in this august assembly was, as in other companies, highly favourable.

Among their acquaintance who were present was Lord D. who came up and talked a good deal to their royal highnesses. "Ask him," said his lordship to me, and speaking o Timour Meerza,—"ask him what he thinks of that lady," pointing out a young and high-born lady, certainly of great personal attractions; but her beauty was not to the taste of the blunt and matter-of-fact Timour, who answered with a twist of his mouth, "That lady? not much, she has no *salt*."—"Well, then," said his lordship, "ask him what he thinks of my cousin here?" Now, knowing the Persian taste, and that here also an unfavourable reply might be expected, although the lady to all English eyes was a very lovely person, I hinted the connec-

tion; upon which he said in English, and assuming a knowing look, "Ah! very purty, very purty lady, indeed;—but where *you* lady? you no got lady? very bad, very bad." His lordship, not being able to deny the charge of celibacy, observed, that he had not yet sought out a wife. "Ah, then," said Timour, earnestly, "why don't you do so? By your head! lose no time about it; *Jan-e-mun!* (my soul!) the life of man is not long enough to put off such matters. In the name of God, get a wife to-morrow, and ask me to be your guest, and I will come and judge of your choice." A great deal passed in this strain with others of the party; and after a while the princes took their leave, warmly impressed with the very kind and gracious reception they had experienced.

On the way home we called in at a party which the princes had been strongly solicited to honour with their presence. But they had seen enough for one day, and, though they did go, it went against the grain; so that, though the lady of the house, a most amiable and agreeable person, did what she could to amuse them, it would not do; they were sadly flat, nor did

they meet with any of their acquaintances to raise their exhausted spirits. There was not on the part of the company, however, any want of interest, and the same eternal string of questions were again and again put and replied to. At length two ladies came up to take the field: neither were much to the prince's taste; but he said to me in a listless voice, "Now, for God's sake! make them compliments; do."—"What shall I say, prince?"—"Oh! say that I am charmed to make their acquaintance, that their beauty ravishes me, and that they are full of spirit and animation."—"What, prince?" said I; "where is the use of all these lies? you are not obliged to say anything of this kind, and why tell a bootless lie?"—"You are perfectly right," replied he; "say nothing about it; neither of them are worth a lie."

Next day they had to encounter a different sort of excitement. There are few of our European institutions which allure more the curiosity of Orientals than freemasonry. Its mysterious secrecy excites their imagination, and particularly of those,—a very large portion, especially in Persia,—who are disposed to Soof-

feeism, or freethinking in religious matters. The accounts they have received of the freemasons of Europe, magnified and probably distorted by the channels through which they reach them, dispose them to imagine that to belong to this fraternity is to obtain possession of much mystical and supernatural knowledge which is hid from the uninitiated; and I have seldom known a Persian, of the description alluded to, who did not desire to become a freemason. Our princes were among the number; their friend and countryman the Meerza, himself a mason, at their earnest request, had made the requisite preparations, and this was the day appointed for their initiation. They were greatly excited; the elder, naturally shy, and imbued with a shrinking dread of all indecorous familiarity, had great doubts about the matter. He had been told,—jokingly, I suppose,—that certain personal liberties were taken with neophites, and he declared to me that such he would assuredly resist. "*Wullah!* Saheb Fraser," said he; "if they attempt anything improper, or even suspicious with me, I will use my fists." It appeared, however, that all passed smoothly,

and that they were very happy, for they returned home full half-seas over.

15th July.

The two younger princes went to Lady M.'s party, which was a very splendid one. It was to have been a fête champêtre, and the gardens were to have been illuminated; but, the weather proving unfavourable, the company were forced to remain in the suites of apartments, which were brilliantly fitted up. The crowd was great, and many of their acquaintances were there; so the Wali, who dislikes walking about, ensconced himself on a sofa in a corner behind a table, and began to scribble verses, for which there was speedily a brisk demand. Sheet after sheet of note-paper did he inscribe with a few lines, which were all one after another carried off by Lady This or That; and all had some point included in few words, and taken either from some Oriental poet or from the magazine of his own brain, which was pretty prolific in these productions. They were such as the following: "Your lips are as a cup, and the words that flow from them as the wine thereof: their sweetness is its intoxication, and delights my soul."

My task in translating these was no easy one; nor was that of rendering into English the compliments of the younger by any means less difficult. He was speedily surrounded with damsels who were curious to know how many wives he had, and what he did with them all, &c. &c. and I wish I could recollect some of the pertinent, though somewhat blunt, replies he returned to such inquiries. The compliments of Timour are obviously words of course, not from the heart; but a flash will ever and anon break forth from his eyes, and then one sees by the animation of his countenance that he feels what he utters. On the pictures of two ladies of the family, very charming and attractive persons, being shown to him, one of whom had for some time past been his acquaintance, and being asked whether he thought them like, he replied, "Yes, they are very well, but of what use are they to me? they have no life. Now these," turning to the originals, who were present,—"these can talk and converse with me, and I feel the full delight of their presence."

July 16th.

The princes being invited by Mr. V. S. to a

fish-dinner at Lovegrove's, we drove thither at the appointed time, and found an exceedingly pleasant party of about thirty persons, ladies as well as gentlemen, with many of whom they were acquainted. The room in which we assembled commanded a cheerful prospect of the river, but their royal highnesses derived no satisfaction from that view. "No, no," replied they, when invited to breathe the fresh air at the window; "we shall see the ships there; and we would rather never taste fresh air, if it is to be spoilt by the sight of the water."

When the dinner was announced, each of the three princes advanced boldly to lead off a lady; and it was amusing to observe how characteristically each performed this office. The eldest, courteous and gentlemanly by nature, offered his arm in a style that was neither deficient in grace nor good-breeding. Timour Meerza claimed his companion with that free and independent air which marks every act and gesture,—as a gallant soldier might claim the mistress he had won by deeds of arms. But the Wali, far less remarkable for manner than

his brothers, although in shrewdness and learning their superior, shoved forth his hand, clutched his partner by the arm, and held it as if it had been the handle of a tea-pot or quart mug. "*Wullah!*" said he, as he entered the dining-room, "I am always ashamed to take hold of these ladies."—"And no wonder," replied the Meerza, who was next him, "when you do it in so awkward a way."

The dinner was perfect both in substance and style. Among the good things of the first course was turtle-soup, a delicacy of which they had heard before; but having a prejudice against the animal,—which they call *cassiposh*, or *dish*-covered, in allusion to its shell,—the Wali, next whom I sat, would not begin upon his portion until he should ascertain whether it were the offensive article or not. Timour had not been so cautious, and was already at work upon it with a relish that proved it was agreeable, when he became informed of the fact; on which he observed that it was not good, and sent it away. The elder prince alone kept his plate without remark, except in answer to an inquiry of how he liked it, when he declared it

to be excellent. Lobsters were another of our delicacies which they could not bring themselves to taste ; and when, on the first course of fish being put down, the Wali saw himself surrounded by turtle and lobsters, it was ludicrous enough to listen to his half-smothered ejaculations of disappointment. But the good things that succeeded made him ample amends for his first alarm, and the champagne with which he washed it down had its full effect in raising his spirits; indeed they all took wine so freely, that I was seriously alarmed for the consequences. I might have known Sheerauzees better ; it was not men accustomed to the Kajers' drinking bouts in that country who were likely to be upset by a few glasses of champagne ; they were seasoned vessels. It only made them more ready with their replies to the questions that were invariably poured upon them, and which it required some ingenuity to frame fresh answers to every day. On being asked why they persisted in the abominable custom of locking up and veiling their women, the Wali, with a knowing look at me, replied, " Tell her, we only veil those who are not worth looking at; but

who would ever think of veiling such fair creatures as we see here?"—"Ah! but in Persia you veil every one, and so would you do here if you could."—"And if we did," replied he, "the resplendence of their beauty, like the brightness of the sun, would shine forth through all veils. We have a Persian proverb which says, there are two things which cannot be hid,—transcendent beauty, and true love.—Tell her that," said he, giving me a push in the side, as much as to say, That will surely please her.

One of the ladies observed, that she understood the Wali had been writing verses for all the ladies at Lady M.'s ball. "Yes," said the Wali, "I did give them verses, and some very good things, too."—"Ah! well then I hope you will give me a couplet also?"—"Yes, by all means," replied he; "and it shall be an excellent one. I hear that the house we have met in to-night is called Lovegrove's, that is, the grove of love; and that subject I shall take to write upon for you."

## LETTER XII.

July 18.

AMONG the objects which it was believed would be most pleasing to the princes in the vicinity of London, was the Arsenal at Woolwich, and the practice there. Directions had accordingly been issued for exhibiting these to their royal highnesses, and this was the day appointed for the purpose. They were themselves desirous of witnessing a spectacle so much to their taste; yet when I arrived at the hotel, within half an hour of the time for starting, not one of them was out of bed. "Ah!" said the prince, on hearing my voice at his room door, "here is Saheb Fraser, sword in hand, to push us out of our holes; a desperate tyrant he is, that Saheb Fraser!" We started about half-past eight; but they had now begun to be so anxious about commencing their return to Per-

sia, that their heads were full of this the whole way down. I have not thought it worth while to advert to this subject of anxiety; but it had for some time been gaining ground, and was one of the causes of that listlessness and indifference to objects of amusement, which was so striking in their demeanour. No doubt it was natural that they should feel deeply anxious for the welfare of their families, and desirous to rejoin them; but yet one would have thought that finding themselves in the greatest capital in Europe, where so many objects which they might never have another opportunity of beholding were pressed upon their view, they might have made the most of their time; but such was not the case; for, whenever a forenoon party was proposed, they first started difficulties and doubts, and, when these were done away, the reply was, "To speak the truth, Saheb Fraser, I have neither heart nor spirits for these things."

We reached Woolwich, however, and were courteously received by Colonel Cleveland, who forthwith ordered horses, and took us down to see the gun practice, with which the day's work was to commence. I did not think they were

so much struck with the spherical case-shot firing as might have been expected; perhaps they did not quite understand the beauty of it; perhaps it was a small exhibition of the *nil admirari* system, which is considered so essential in the demeanour of great men in Persia. If so, they were surprised out of it by the rocket practice, which was quite new to them, and which gave them great delight.

They were equally so with the battering-train practice, and examined with care and admiration the beautiful construction of the gun-carriages, and the ease with which the gun traversed, and the precision with which it was pointed. They requested permission to lay a gun themselves; but, ignorant of the necessary elevation to be given, they laid it so low that the ball would have struck the ground half-way, and ricochetted over the mark; a thing it was difficult to make them comprehend, even though some of the shots laid by the artillerists at a higher elevation struck short. But what struck them most, as it did all of us, was the firing of the huge gun of twelve-inch bore with hollow shot. To see this devil sending its black

messenger, like an imp of darkness, with great precision and enormous force to a distance of one thousand two hundred yards, and with a roar that almost cracked the drums of our ears, was truly an imposing proof of the extent of human science as directed to the destruction of the human species; it seemed as if the art of projectiles could go no further.

After this display we went through the vast storehouses, where the princes were not a little impressed by the beautiful order, as well as the apparently endless quantity of every article of military appliance and material in its own department. One of the things which struck them most was a set of harness complete, in piles, for ten thousand horses. The bridles hanging from the roof, with the bright curb-chains depending below the rest, resembled an immense quantity of crystal pendents. In fact, one of the princes was deceived by their appearance, and called out, "What! are these *chehel cherâghs?*" (chandeliers, or lustres.) On being informed what they were, Timour Meerza eyed them with a keener glance of delight, and exclaimed, "Ah, to be sure! worth a thousand

*chehel cherâghs;* send them to the ball-rooms, and let me have these."

The laboratory was next examined, and the princes were delighted with the rapidity of work in the cartridge-making department; and particularly with a beautiful invention of Mr. Coffin, the superintendent, for filling them with the most perfect precision and wonderful despatch. They could hardly credit that in the time of war there were seven hundred and twenty thousand ball-cartridges manufactured here every day by twelve hundred boys. The saw-mill and boring apparatus were next examined; and the precision and force of the former, with its facility of application to the minutest as well as the largest work, was viewed with much interest.

The remark of the eldest prince, when he had completed the examination of the stores and laboratory, &c. and had viewed the multitude of guns that lay covering many acres of ground, indicated sufficiently the impression which the display had made upon his mind. "With such means," said he, "and such a *karkhaneh,* (literally, manufactory and its apparatus,) and such a magazine, where is the power

that could go to war with you? There can be none!—it is impossible."

After this exhibition, during which the princes were most kindly and attentively conducted by Colonel Cleveland, the eldest expressed a wish to examine some of the soldiers' apartments and outfit, which was at once complied with. The order and cleanliness of the rooms had their due effect: indeed, I must say, that the two elder princes in particular have at all times evinced a greater desire to see the useful objects of interest in the country, than those which are merely calculated to afford amusement; and the eldest, in particular, appeared constantly on the watch for useful information, as if he still entertained the hope that one day or other he might again be in a position to turn it to account. He asked to look at one of the men's knapsacks, which was immediately opened for his inspection. Astonished at the number of articles it contained, and the compactness with which they were put up, he exclaimed, "*Afereen!* this is equal to a whole Persian house!"

But seeing a Bible and Prayer-book among

other things, and being told what they were, he said, "What has a soldier to do with these?" I was not sorry that he should witness this proof of our regard for our religion,—a point in which, from the little parade we make of it, the Persians think us deficient,—and accordingly I replied, "What, prince! is a soldier then not to fear God?"—"You are right," said he; "it is very proper:" adding in English, "very good, very good."

This concluded the first part of the day's work, and we adjourned to take wine and sandwiches in the mess-room; after which we went to see the mortar practice near the barracks. This was very good; and as they saw the huge shells journeying through the air, and ploughing up the ground close to the flag-staff, they could not contain their excitement and delight. The practice terminated in a salvo of all the mortars, which made a magnificent noise; while the shells looked like a legion of imps hurrying through the air on errands of mischief and death.

The model-house, which they next saw, is a study for days; but we could only afford it a

short and transitory glance. They were delighted at recognising the rock of Gibraltar, where they had called on their way to England, and where the kind attention of its governor, Sir Ralph Woodford, appears to have made a most lasting impression on their minds. They were amused, too, with the model of Russian artillery; but the pile of various old arms in the centre attracted as much notice as anything, for much of the rest was beyond their comprehension. Timour, in particular, was delighted with the old guns and pistols. There were many persons in the place, strangers like ourselves, admitted to view the models; and among them a good many ladies, who all clustered about the princes, attracted by their remarkable dress. "What business have women here?" said Timour: "this is the place for men; let *them* go to the opera!"

One of the most interesting parts of the spectacle yet remained. It had been most considerately arranged, that, in order to gratify their royal highnesses to the full, and to show them what British artillery was, there should be a review in the evening expressly for this

purpose; and we now went to see it. Both the horse and foot artillery were on the ground, and waited their arrival to commence. The princes accompanied Colonel Cleveland along the front, and back between the ranks, and then galloped back to the flag-staff. It was on such occasions that the elder prince felt himself in his own element, and manifested by his bearing and demeanour his innate title to respect and command. You saw that they were familiar to him; his *maintien* was truly princely; and he received the salutes of the troops and their officers, as they marched past, with a courtesy and grace, and yet with a dignity, that could not be surpassed. As the slow pace with which the troops first marched past was exchanged, first for a trot, and then for a gallop, the whole three got highly excited, especially Timour. "Plenty of dust!" observed I to him, as the thick cloud from the plain enveloped us, before passing away with the wind—"Ay," said he; "and so it were the dust of victory, would to God that my throat were full of it!" The capital manœuvring, and the admirably rapid firing, filled them with delight; but there was

one feat which perfectly confounded them. To show the high state of perfection to which the discipline and mechanical address of the men is carried, as well as their practical efficiency, the whole corps halted, dismounted their guns, taking each carriage entirely to pieces, almost in the twinkling of an eye; and remained sitting upon the dismembered heap at ease, for a moment or two. At the word of command, up they rose, put all to rights as rapidly as they had dislocated it, remounted the guns, loaded and commenced firing; and I do believe that scarce forty seconds had elapsed from the beginning of the manœuvre till the firing of the first gun. The princes looked at one another in almost speechless amazement; and the few low bewildered expressions that passed between them were more expressive of their feelings than the most passionate exclamations of applause could have been.

When all was over, there was a general salute, which the prince, as before, received with the grace of a monarch and the air of a practised soldier: and after some warm acknowledgments to Colonel Cleveland, and ex-

pressions of admiration to the officers, we got into our carriage and drove away.

Pleasure, like labour, has its toils; and though the day had been particularly fine, and productive of as much delight as possible, rest was acceptable to us all. Accustomed as the princes, and I may say myself, were to riding, the exertion of some good hard galloping after a considerable period of disuse, and to them particularly, unprovided with their usual riding gear, was not inconsiderable, and our muscles were all a little sore. Yet, when on their horses, they felt themselves at home; and the remembrance of former days excited Timour so much, that he set off more than once at speed, and, drawing his sword, gave the crowd that followed us a small specimen of the Persian cavalry exercise. He ran at his brother, who fled, as was his part; and, when overtaken, threw himself out of the saddle on the other side. "He is off! the prince is off!" cried one of the men. "Not at all; make yourself quite easy," said I, laughing; "you don't know Persian riding: he is only *showing* off; he would pick up a pin from the road at speed, in the

way you saw just now." Accordingly, scarce had the words passed my lips, when the prince was in his seat again, having hung on by the leg all the time; and he laughed heartily when I told him what the soldier had said: as for the man, he looked quite astounded at the thing. When we reached town, I left the princes, resolved to go to bed; where, I dare say, they remained till late, although they had still their dinner to take.

July 21.

The princes having expressed to me a wish to see rather some of our more useful institutions than trivial exhibitions and amusements, which leave little impression, and lead to no improvement, I had procured admissions for them to Bedlam, the Penitentiary, and some of the principal prisons. The first they had desired particularly to see; and, though the day was bad, we went to it this forenoon. I was disappointed in the degree of effect apparently produced by the sight of this excellent establishment; and yet they were decidedly impressed by the remarkable cleanliness and good order which pervade it, and still more so, perhaps,

by the power which the keepers had obviously attained over the patients by mildness, and a kind though firm demeanour. It was this which I principally endeavoured to make them sensible of, and to show that scarcely any severity or restraint beyond that of retaining them within the prescribed limits of the wards or grounds was imposed. The sight, however, of a mad-house is always melancholy and depressing; and though there was little of pain, and much of cheerfulness and comfort, to meet the eye, still there were some cases which were calculated to excite sympathy and commiseration in a more than ordinary degree. Among these were two girls, each obviously of great natural genius and talent, but differing extremely in the tone of their minds, and, consequently, in that of their mental derangement. One, who was something of a poetess, and made verses, was of a serious and sentimental turn; and, had it not been for that distressing wildness and disturbance which the mental distortion imparts to the physical appearance, would have been very pretty and prepossessing. Her address to the prince was strange and affecting.

She questioned him about his belief in God, and his fear of breaking his laws. "Do you believe in God?" said she, looking earnestly in his face.—"*I* do."—"Do you fear God?"—"I do."—"Do you dread to break his commandments?"—"I do." And so she went on, until the housekeeper, fearing probably the effect of too much excitement, told her to cease and go to her room; which the poor thing did at once.

The other, who was also good-looking, although of a wild and excited expression, was flighty and high-spirited, and rattled away at a sad rate. She asked the princes their names, and made some clever remark on each. When the youngest answered that his name was Timour, she quickly replied, "Ah! Timour the Tartar!—well, you are Timour, and I 'm the Tartar,—ain't I?—And what is your name?" addressing the Wali, who stood looking on with a grim smile. "Wali," said he. "Wali! oh, what a name!—strange figure, too!" said she, measuring him with her eyes. "Well, Mr. Wali, I 'll tell you what you 'll do. I 'm going

to get out of this place soon, they can't keep me long; and you shall take me for a nursery governess, and I 'll teach you the tricks of Bedlam."

Among the men, too, there were some interesting objects. Hatfield, who shot at King George the Third, was still in his comfortable apartment, surrounded by his birds and animals, living and stuffed, canaries, parrots, &c.; and, on being told the story, the princes were much struck by the spirit of clemency, (for they could not exactly feel it to be justice,) which had provided for the comforts of one who, even in a state of derangement, had attempted such a crime. There was Martin, too, the incendiary of York cathedral, who was reading his Bible at a table on which were sundry religious books. And there were many dark-looking men,—murderers, it is to be hoped from erring reason,—who are prisoners for life at the expense of the country. At one woman the Persians themselves, though presumed to be well acquainted with horrors, looked half aghast, when they learned that she had cut off the head of a

child; all but the Wali, who, for all his demureness, is the most determined and truculent character of the three,—he who mentioned as rather an indifferent matter his having cut off a sackful of fingers. He looked at her through his glass with much *sang-froid,* and merely asked "*Hameen bood?*—Was that her?"

One very curious case was shown us of a man who, having betrayed a strong disposition to self-destruction, was deprived of all visible means of putting his design in execution; yet he almost attained his object by a process which could not have been pre-supposed. He contrived to set fire to a bench in his cell, and held his head to the burning wood until not only the skin and flesh, but the very skull was charred to a considerable extent. In this state he was found; and medical help being obtained, strange to say, he recovered from the effects of this attempt, but with the loss of a considerable portion of his cranium. What is stranger still is, that although the slightest blow of his defenceless head against the wall would produce death, he now never shows the least disposition to such violence, although it is more,

I believe, than two years since the event took place.

Before the whole survey was completed, the princes were tired of going through the galleries, and begged to return home; yet they were prevailed upon to take a look at a neighbouring establishment for the employment and recovery from evil ways of juvenile culprits. It was a singular proof of the inconsistency of such uneducated minds, that, though fully assenting to the utility of such an institution, and professing particular anxiety for seeing things of the sort, this admirably regulated establishment could not interest them sufficiently to complete an examination of its details, though well worthy of their attention. The thing that engaged Timour's regard the most was the process of making beer in the brewhouse. Nothing, however, could detain him from his favourite haunt at the gunmaker's, at whose shop he insisted on making a long halt on our return. He had the evening before accompanied Mr. Tatham to try a gun, which was in process of being made for him; and proved its goodness and his own dexterity by making a

capital shot at a pigeon which was accidentally flying past, and which he almost cut to pieces in the air. He would be quite at home at the Red-house, which sporting establishment I must try to show him.

## LETTER XIII.

THIS day the princes received from Mr. Colnaghi, by desire of her royal highness the Duchess of Kent, a print of her royal highness and of the Princess Victoria; and the elder prince immediately set to work to write some lines which might be transmitted in a letter of thanks for this gracious attention. In the evening he displayed them to us, and was in ecstasies with his performance. "Nothing," said he, "ever was or will be written like them. Nothing so happy was ever produced. They are truly admirable!"—"What!" said I, "are they equal to the verses of Hafiz, or to those of the Moollah of Roum?"—"To speak the truth," replied the prince gravely, "they are quite so. Indeed, I remember nothing in the Moollah's works equal to them."—"These gentlemen know how to blow their own trumpet

well," observed I to the Meerza, who was present. He explained to them the meaning of the English proverb, adding, that such would be the remark men would make here, did they hear what his royal highness had said; but without mentioning that I had applied it. "*Belli*—well," said the prince; "but yet it is the truth, and why should I not say it?" In fact, such boasting is common to all Persians, especially authors of poetical or literary compositions, and held nowise disreputable in that country. It is the common way of talking, and is regarded merely as the expression of an opinion.

Afterwards we went to an evening party, at old Lady C.'s; it was small: they found several of their friends here, and soon were at home. The elder prince monopolized a lady to whom he had taken a mighty fancy; and the Wali was listless and dull till awakened by the arrival of Mrs. L. S., whose place was afterwards filled by Miss H. V.: with the latter he was in raptures, and his expressions grew so warm, and his compliments so direct, that I dared not translate all he said; and this he quickly found out,

and abused me for it. Upon some question regarding music arising, Miss H. V. inquired whether the Wali was fond of it; on which he replied earnestly, "Tell the lady that the music which she made for me the other night at Sir J. H.'s still remains in my ears, as the effect of her beauty does, and always will do, in my heart." There was always something laughable in the manner of the Wali's compliments, although the matter was often neat and well-expressed: he would impart his conceit to the person interpreting for him as earnestly as if it were an argument brought forward in a court of justice, seizing hold of an arm to give it weight; and then would look you in the face with a strange chuckle, as if he had delivered himself of a mighty good thing. Timour fluttered about from belle to belle, but the pretty and lively Miss R. was his chief object of attraction. I had a hard time of it between them all, and could not help observing that I never again should find myself so much in request. The only rest I had was when a singular artiste was exhibiting his performance, which was that of imitating all manner of birds and animals: he

was blind and dumb, if I mistake not, yet his imitative powers were amazing; he contrived to mimic a whole farm-yard at once.

When the evening was drawing to a close, and the hour of supper or refreshment had arrived, the old lady took the hand of the Wali, who was standing with Timour Meerza near her, and put it on the arm of a very beautiful girl, motioning that he should lead her down stairs; she then took that of Timour, but instead of presenting him, as he expected, to his friend Miss R. who was also close by, she drew it through her own most venerable arm, and walked off with him. The sight of his countenance at this arrangement would have been worth any money to an artist in search of a subject. "Eh-eh!" said he, after his comical blank look had a little gone off; "my luck is high to-night: see, Wali, see how I am off! Burn the old lady! what made her fix upon me?" The age of our hostess was then mentioned to the Wali by his partner; upon which he gave a grunt of mingled astonishment and mirth, and then told the following story, which he requested

me to translate for the benefit of his fair companion.

"In the time of Huzrut Moossa (the prophet Moses)," said he, "there was an old woman, a widow, whose years exceeded a hundred, and she had been long dumb from very age; but she still insisted on guiding her family, and kept all her children, who amounted to forty or fifty, locked up in cages in her house, so that they could not go out and enjoy themselves. Weary, at length, of their confinement, they applied to Moses, and besought him to pray to God to have their old mother removed, that they might have their turn of enjoyment. 'That can be done,' replied Moses; 'but say, shall I not rather offer her the choice of another husband?' The children scoffed at this idea; but the old woman, in whose presence this passed, got into a furious passion, and her tongue, which had been still for years, got into play at the very mention of another husband. 'You wretched wretches!' she exclaimed, 'would you interfere with the favour of the prophet of God towards me, and prevent me from enjoying the good he offers?'"

Next day the princes went, by appointment, to Kensington, and had an interview with his royal highness the Duke of Sussex, by whom they were most kindly received. His royal highness took occasion to mention, in flattering terms, the interest their royal highnesses had excited in England, and even in the highest quarters; and expressed his assurance that, though matters of etiquette prevented their being received in a public manner at court, they would find everywhere the greatest possible desire to promote their legitimate views, and to provide for their comfort. In proof of the good disposition towards them of even the most distinguished personages of this country, his royal highness instanced the fact of her majesty having given them the meeting in the castle at Windsor; a step which, though apparently accidental, had, he could assure them, been contrived on purpose to gratify them. The princes, in reply, acknowledged most gratefully their sense of this and every other kindness they had received since their arrival on English ground; and protested that they had nothing more at heart than to have the power, at some future

day, of evincing the sincerity of that gratitude. The conversation then turned naturally upon their future prospects, and purposed return to Baghdad; and the prince did not lose the opportunity to express emphatically the strong aversion which they all felt to a return by sea. To this his royal highness replied by expressing his conviction that, if any other convenient mode for returning could be pointed out, no violence would be put upon their feelings by seeking to induce them to do what appeared to them so disagreeable.

His royal highness was still suffering a degree of confinement in consequence of the operation on his eyes. This circumstance afforded grounds for a good story at the princes' expense. It was put about in town that, when informed of the state of his royal highness's eyes, they had replied, "Ah! it is very well for you to tell us that the Shah's brother's eyes are in a bad state, and have had an operation performed upon them: we know well enough what that operation was; he was *yaghee*, (rebellious,) and the king ordered him to be blinded; it is the way with us at home." Like the story of their being stripped

by Wullee Khan, it has but one fault; there is no truth in it.

From the palace we went direct to the house of Sir James South, where the princes had been invited, in hopes of getting a peep at something or other through his large telescope, and seeing, perhaps, the stars at noon-day: but the weather proved utterly unfavourable, and there fell one of the heaviest pelts of rain I ever saw in any country; it actually deluged the place for the time. The only thing we caught was a glimpse at the spots on the sun's face, just before the shower came on; and we took our leave, proposing to return again in the evening. In this, too, however, we were doomed to be disappointed. We did go, to be sure; but so little is it possible to make these Orientals comprehend the value of time and exactness, that the promised music of the spheres itself would not have induced them to keep their appointment. We were just about half an hour too late for what we wanted; yet we did get a beautiful view of the moon and of Saturn, and of some fine double stars. They were much interested with all they saw, but I scarcely think so much

so as to induce them to make a like exertion again; but they were most grateful to Sir James South, who, with infinite patience and good-nature, exerted himself to satisfy their curiosity, and took a great deal of trouble.

July 22.—The princes went to-day, at the kind invitation of the chairman of the court of directors, to see the India-house and its curiosities, and were received by that gentleman with the greatest courtesy and attention. They viewed the museum, and were amused by some of the Indian relics; but were far more interested by the library, where they got hold of some fine Persian MSS. They could not conceal their astonishment at hearing that there were three thousand of these manuscripts, the most of them very valuable. "What news is this?" said the prince. "Where could these have come from, Wali? the late Shah himself had not such a collection." The great picture, which represents the Shah and his sons in a hunting party, murdering all sorts of game in the most cool and truculent manner imaginable, was the thing that pleased them next best; for there they could discover all their uncles as well as their father,—

handsome beardless youths at the time it was done, — and amuse themselves by tracing the fancied likenesses.

After spending a considerable time in the library, the party, which had been increased by the addition of several ladies and other gentlemen, adjourned to partake of an excellent lunch which was provided below stairs.

In the evening they went to a very pleasant party, at the house of Mrs. R., where Timour Meerza entered into a violent flirtation with the young lady of the house, whom he had several times before met, and whom he now declared he had taken as his wife; and there were some giving of flowers, and other little gallantries, which all passed off very well. A question then arose as to the truth of the assertion, that in Eastern countries different flowers have meanings respectively assigned to them, through which an intercourse could be maintained by parties sending each other nosegays. The younger prince replied, certainly that such was the case. "You agree," said he, "that such a flower represents the letter *aleph*, such another *bé*, and so on; so that the person to whom the nosegay is sent shall

be able to read any sentence you may choose to compose, as for instance, 'I die for you.'"—"Well then," said Miss R. in reply to this somewhat prosaic explanation of a favourite poetical idea; "but what would this flower mean in the East?" showing a blood-red carnation. "Oh!" said Timour, "it would mean that when you present it to me, my face will blush to the same colour." "No," said the elder prince, to whom the same question was put by another lady; "it would mean that my heart has become *kebaub* (roast meat),—that it burns, in fact, for you." As for the Wali, whether it was that he was sulky at having his own original favourite, for such had Miss R. been at first, seduced from him by his younger brother, I cannot say; but he remained sitting all night apart in the ante-room, writing verses, and talking to a gentleman who was versed in the Oriental languages, with whom he held some long and learned discussions.

On the 23rd of July the princes partook of the splendid dinner given by the East India Company to Lord Elphinstone, on his going out as governor to Madras. It was a very magnificent affair; upwards of an hundred and fifty persons, I believe,

sat down to dinner; and the company included the greater number of the ministers of the crown, and many of the most distinguished of the nobility of the country, besides the directors and chief officers of the great body which provided the feast. There was abundance of every delicacy, fine music, and everything that can heighten the pomp and attractions of such an entertainment; yet the princes did not enjoy it, and for this there were many reasons. In the first place, wherever they had dined hitherto they had seen themselves the chief objects of attention; they felt and enjoyed an importance which they had, from their youth upwards, been accustomed to: here, from the nature of the entertainment, such could not be the case; they found themselves in the assembling-rooms mingled with a crowd of people of whom they knew few or none, and who, though civil and good-humoured, did not make objects of them. The occasion was one of a public and official nature, where consequently official rank necessarily took precedence of those who had no public character to support; and thus, of necessity, the places assigned to them at table were low: this they

felt severely. Finally, they understood not, and could enter into nothing of what was going on; and, even though each had an interpreter at his elbow, it was impossible to convey to them the spirit of what was passing.

To add to their discomfort, the Wali, who had been out of order all day, got worse at dinner, and was forced to leave the room with the interpreter Assad, and to go home to his hotel. Thus, from first to last, matters went wrong; and, in spite of the satisfaction they derived from a very kind interview and conversation with Lord P., who on all occasions treated them with a consideration and goodness which called forth their never-ceasing acknowledgments, they left the feast-chamber discontented and out of humour.

The fact is, that these unfortunate princes, whatever they may say or imagine, have not yet brought their minds to the level of their fallen state; and, from being in misfortune, they are the more jealous of any diminution in the observances of respect to which they have been accustomed, and which they regard as due to their birth. "We have lost everything," said

the prince to me afterwards, in talking of this affair; "we have neither country, nor sway, nor followers, nor property; all that is gone, nothing is left us but our *shazadehgee*,—our princely birth; of that they could not deprive us, nor can we divest ourselves of it if we would." Thus, though, in fact, reduced to the condition of private persons, and acknowledging themselves to be so, they stand upon their rank of birth, and cannot sink the prince; they have no idea of the incognito which is often assumed by royalty in Europe; and, even if they do for a while lay aside their high pretensions, they are disgusted if they find them disregarded. The prince attacked me violently next morning for permitting such an indignity to be offered him. I endeavoured to show him the unreasonableness of this charge, by explaining to him the difference between appearing in a public and a private character: that he must be sensible that in all private parties there was no need to stickle for a precedence which was always most readily granted to himself and his brothers; but that on public occasions, public men must, as a matter of course, take their due and legitimate places,

and that all persons invested with merely private characters must give way,—it was a case of necessity, not of choice: and that, where the intention was good, it was scarcely gracious to quarrel with his friends for not performing impossibilities.

But even this did not satisfy the prince. "If they could not give me a suitable place," said he, "they should not have asked me, and you should not have let me go. *I* had no wish to go; I only went at your suggestion." "Prince," said I, "let us cut this matter short. The object of those who invited you, like mine, was your amusement; we thought you would like to see a large and splendid public dinner. The intention, as I said before, was good. They could not calculate upon feelings which they saw no cause for the existence of. If you don't like such parties, you need go to no more of them; but don't blame me hereafter if you find yourself neglected from a fear of offending your fastidiousness. I think you are unreasonable, but I will not say one word more on the subject." And I did say no more, but let him talk on and exhaust himself. This soon

brought him up; and he ended his harangue by saying, "Well, remember this is all between ourselves; let it go no further." — "By all means," replied I; and the subject was dropped.

The fact is, that the *row* made on this occasion by the prince originated partly in a genuine soreness of feeling, and partly from those motives of policy and self-importance which are constantly stimulating Persian courtiers to skirmishes on points of etiquette and precedence. But to a certain extent the prince was right; the place to be assigned to him should have been explained to him, and he should have had the choice of going, or not going, conceded to him in proper time.

## LETTER XIV.

July 26.—This day the princes enjoyed a great treat; their friend, Sir G. O., who had left town, invited them to go and spend a day in the country, at his beautiful place near Beaconsfield. We reached this charming residence after a pleasant and beautiful drive, in a morning just such as we might have chosen for the purpose had we had the choice; and greatly did the poor princes, who were heartily sick of London, rejoice at getting rid, even for a few hours, of its noise, and its rattle, and its dust, and bad air. Nor could there be a more delightful contrast to all they had left behind than was furnished by the scenes to which they had come: such lawns, such grassy slopes, such velvet terraces, such forests of evergreens, such magnificent yew hedges, such woods and noble old trees, with fine long vistas, and temples, and carving in

old grey stone, and points of view with seats to sit and gaze from! It was a happy union of the old and modern style of pleasure-ground; but so extensive! so much under shears and scythe, and yet in such good taste! nothing prim nor finical: in fact, the fine old timber and noble growth of wood were of themselves sufficient to impart an air of magnificence to the whole. Nor was the house unworthy of the place: a large and handsome addition had been made to the old building; giving, besides a capital dining-room, drawing-room, and saloon, twelve fine large spare bed-rooms. All these were most beautifully and tastefully furnished; and composed, on the whole, a most admirably convenient and comfortable, as well as spacious, family residence.

At the door of this mansion the princes were received by its master and mistress, who conducted them to the drawing-room; but after a very short while we all found ourselves strolling about upon the beautiful lawn and pleasure-grounds behind the house. Here Timour ran and skipped about like a young kid, chasing the little pheasant chicks that were feeding about, and trying to catch them as they flew in the air;

he was absolutely wild with spirits. The elder prince enjoyed himself more soberly. As for the poor Wali, we had left him in town recovering from his indisposition, which had turned out to be a severe bilious attack. From the time of his arrival it was impossible to prevent him from indulging in his Persian habits of eating all manner of trash, quantities of raw cucumbers, green fruit, and other indigestible substances, which, when in the course of daily exercise, might be productive of no ill consequence, but which, confined as he was by indolence almost to his room, could not fail of producing disorder.

After strolling about for some time through the extensive and beautiful grounds, we returned to the house, where a rich feast for the princes was found in Sir G.'s collection of Persian MSS. and other valuable curiosities from the East; but so inveterate is habit, that the elder prince could not get over the whole forenoon without retiring, according to custom, for a few hours' sleep before dinner. After a most handsome entertainment, and a very pleasant evening, we returned to London.

It was at this time that I received official in-

timation that my charge of the princes was not intended to cease with their stay in England, but that I should be required to accompany them on their land journey homeward, probably as far as the Turkish capital. This I had foreseen, and was prepared to expect. The inveterate and ineradicable horror which they had imbibed for the sea, had, on all occasions, been so strongly expressed, that, however more desirable and convenient it might have been to forward their royal highnesses by ship to the point of the Mediterranean nearest to their purposed route, the idea had been abandoned as unnecessarily cruel and inhospitable; and it was resolved to comply with their wishes, and forward them overland in as much comfort as the nature of the journey admitted of. But, strangers as both they and their interpreter Assad Khayat (who still remained with, and was to accompany them,) were to the mode of travelling and the customs of the Continent, it became absolutely necessary to intrust them to the charge of some one who might conduct them safely to a point in their journey where they should be able to shift for themselves, and I was pitched upon to perform this

duty. That it would be no light charge I had good cause to anticipate, for I had had already sufficient experience of their being, with all their good qualities, little else than great spoilt children, wayward and capricious, as much from habit and education, as from utter ignorance of the world; and I prepared myself for the endurance of much absurdity and vexation, resolved to oppose all obliquities of conduct by a steady perseverance in what I saw right, tempered with an indulgent forbearance towards all innocent fancies, however fantastical, where such could be safely permitted. I knew that the elder prince had a kind heart, and much good sense and propriety of feeling when not perverted by some inherent prejudice or momentary impulse; and I trusted to the influence which he possessed over his brothers to control their eccentricities or occasional errors of conduct. In fact, I had become deeply interested in these almost homeless wanderers, as I cannot help being in all that belongs to their country; and felt a strong desire to see them put at least into the way of rejoining their families. At this time it was understood that their departure would take place on an

early day, and our preparations accordingly commenced. Circumstances, as you know, occurred to delay our journey for a considerable time longer.

The London season was now over, and the town thinning rapidly. Many of the princes' friends and acquaintances had departed; and, though there was no want of invitations or parties, their indolence appeared increased, and they went out less than before. What they loved was a quiet dinner with a few friends; and if this dinner was at the hotel where they lived, and where they felt under no constraint, and could do as they pleased, it was so much the better. The unfettered and even capricious freedom of their own habits of life, so different in many respects from stricter formalities of English society, was what they delighted in when alone. They took their meals when they were hungry, not when the victuals were ready, nor at any fixed hour, — an irregularity which was sadly discomfiting to the *artiste* at Mivart's, who did not know what to prepare, or when to have it cooked; nay, sometimes at midnight one of them, who perhaps had not been hungry at dinner-time, feeling a craving, would rouse the

house to get him something to eat. Then they took whims for particular things, plentiful and common enough in Persia, but which were not always at hand; and thus unintentionally gave a great deal of trouble, which I must say was most good-humouredly borne by all the servants of the hotel. In fact, the affability and gentle manners of the elder prince, and the good-natured thoughtless freedom of the third, had won the hearts of the household, and made them great favourites at Mivart's; as for the Wali, he was inoffensive at least, for more than half his hours were spent in sleep.

The remarkable thing is, that none of these eccentricities, no *gaucherie* or vulgarism, ever appeared in society; there they seemed intuitively to seize the tone of those with whom they associated, and to do as they saw others do, with a facility which was sufficient to excite surprise. They never made any mistakes of consequence; and handled their knives, forks, and glasses as if they had done so from their youth upwards; and comported themselves with a decorum which it would have been difficult to find fault with. Nor was the readiness with which

they adopted the taste for European cookery, less remarkable: this is so different from that of the East, that the change, it might have been conceived, would be disagreeable to them; but, so little was this the case, that, when asked what dishes they preferred, the reply usually was, "Oh! anything; just what you English eat." There were, however, exceptions: some dishes they would not eat; two have been mentioned already,—turtle and lobsters. To these at first was added oysters; and, in fact, their aversion seemed to extend to all shell-fish with one exception, and that, strange enough to say, was shrimps. To these, or something of the sort, they had been accustomed in the south of Fars, and Timour especially was very fond of them.

To turtle and lobsters they obstinately maintained their antipathy, refusing to taste them, although mock-turtle soup was one of their favourite dishes; but one day, as a dish of nice scolloped oysters was put on the table at Mivart's, I pressed Timour Meerza to taste a little bit. He confessed that the dish looked very well, and smelt very well; and after a queer imploring look at his brothers, and a glance of irre-

solution at the morsel, he put it in his mouth. His countenance betrayed that the taste was not displeasing; he asked for another morsel—swallowed it—and then desired the whole shell to be sent to him. This he gobbled up without a word; and then, turning to his brother, said, "*Daddâish*, by your head, it is capital! what fools we have been! Saheb Fraser, pray order that a dish of these same oysters be set down at table every day we dine here. *Ajaib-cheezee ust!*—a wonderful sort of thing it is!" In fact, after this, he ate so much of them, that they were, I do believe, a principal cause of a sharp illness which he had soon after.

Another dish of which they became very fond was a preparation of cream, under the name of *Charlotte Russe*. The Wali, in particular, was a great admirer of it, and ate, as he always did when he got what he liked, to excess, making all the time puns and bon-môts in Persian on the sweetness and fairness of his favourite dish as compared with the living Charlottes of his acquaintance. Still, after they had been for some time in London, they began to long for some of their Persian fare; and, as

one of their servants was a cook, by the assistance of Mr. Mivart's *artiste* the matter was easily managed, and pillaws of various sorts, and sundry stews, *mutenjâns, fizenjans, moosommahs, cookoos,* and vegetables *à-la-mode de Perse,* made their appearance at their table. That same *artiste* of Mr. Mivart's, if he had the true gastronomic genius, must have got some good hints for new dishes; for though the Persian cookery deals much in butter, and may be too greasy for many palates, it has points that by proper modification could not fail being turned to good advantage.

To all other motives for desiring their departure, increasing *ennui* was added. The mornings of the princes were spent in listless idleness, dwelling on the subjects of anxiety connected with their peculiar situation, and unable to rouse themselves to use the ample means of diversion and amusement in their power. The Wali slept away much of his time, as usual. The elder prince wrote his journal, or lounged away in his room; and Timour would either repair to his dear gunshop, or sit drawing strange figures, and making copies of

prints, in which native genius was singularly contrasted with the effect of want of practice. Their chief recreation was a gossip over the way at Mr. Partridge's, where their picture was going on capitally, and they had made themselves quite at home; or a ride or drive in the Park towards dinner-time, horses being furnished them from Mr. Allen's riding-school. In the evenings they sometimes went out to parties; and occasionally to Vauxhall, Astley's, or the theatre: but as little occurred at the first beyond the same round of questions, compliments, and answers; and the novelty of the spectacles had worn off, leaving no room for original remark, I need not trouble you with a journal of such trifles: in fact I cannot, for, as they furnished nothing worth recording, I took no note of them; perhaps you may think the same of much that I have told you.

During this period of dulness and *ennui* it was a charity in any friend to visit them; and I made it a point to be regular in my attendance, even when I could do little to comfort them. But it was often extremely distressing to witness the low spirits of the elder prince. Every

time I entered the room their countenances would brighten up, as they sat in various listless attitudes; and "Ah! here is Saheb Fraser, with good news, I see; come, tell us what it is," was the constant address. But Saheb Fraser had too often no good news to tell; and it was painful to mark the fall of their countenances when my own blank visage, and the "*Hanoze heech khubber na darum*—As yet I have no news," met their eyes and their ears.

"Fraser Saheb," would the prince say with earnestness, "is it true that you have no news,—that you really know nothing?—is all going well? What then is the cause of delay? *Eh-Wahi!* If you had wives and children, as we have, that you had not seen for more than a year, you would know what we feel:—and it is on me that all this comes; I must think for these two brothers of mine,—mine is all the anxiety. *Ai Wahi! Ai Wahi!* this uncertainty is death. I am tired of this London, I can't breathe in it; I am choked—my heart is bursting! If I but knew we were to be two months here, or a year, we would make up our minds, and get some little place in the country

where we might walk and ride about; but here! — *Wullah Billah!* Saheb Fraser, we shall die if we stay here:—see! we are all ill already."

It was in vain that I reasoned with him, and besought him to have patience; reminded him that at the moment there were a multitude of grave affairs before government; and that if they desired to give their friends fair scope to act for them, and to have their business well and completely done, they must not attempt to hurry matters. But they were like a child which frets itself into illness because it cannot immediately obtain the toy it has set its heart on: It was always, "if we but knew when; if we could but be certain!" The Wali, believing that I knew more than I chose to say, sometimes attempted to surprise me into a confession. "I have a ring, Saheb Fraser, which I wish to have made," said he to me one day; "but the jeweller tells me it will take a fortnight to finish. Shall I give it him? What is your advice? Shall we have time?" I smiled, and told him he knew as much as I did, and must use his own discretion. When I recommended them to go out and take the air, and amuse

themselves with the ample means in their power, the answer was still the same: "By your own death! we have neither heart nor spirits for it; we can enjoy nothing; our minds are sad, and our hearts are away." And then they would tell me of dreams, in which they saw their wives and children, and were united to their families, and all was joy; and they were relating their adventures, and all they had suffered for their sakes. Alas! I knew too well what this sort of feeling is, for I had experienced it; and how could I always parry with success their earnest appeals, or rebuke their despondency too severely?

I did my best to comfort them, however; and often, in talking of their own country, would the prince lose remembrance of his griefs for a time, and become animated with the recollections of former days. He would describe with complacency his own mode of life, and pour out a number of anecdotes which, could I have set them down as he narrated them, would have amused you, as they did me.

One day we had been talking of early rising, and I was upbraiding them with their indo-

lence and departure from their Oriental habits. "Ah!" replied he, "you are right; in Persia it was otherwise. The Persians rise early, you know they do; and so did we,—there was no laziness when we were there. In the morning, Saheb Fraser, we used always to get up before day, as you are aware, to morning prayers; and, if there were a mosque near, we repaired to it to say our *Numâz;* if not, we performed them at home. This, if properly gone through, would occupy three hours: not the *Numâz* alone, for that may be got over in a few minutes; but there are prayers that should be said, and readings, and meditations. Ah! by your death, prayers are a serious affair with some! All men do not go through the whole of this, it is true, for many a prayer is but a form; but those who are truly religious make a point of it. Well! after this, I used generally to go to the *Zôr-khaneh,* (or place for gymnastic exercises,) where I went through my athletics, and exercised myself for an hour and a half; and because, as you know, we perform all these without any clothes except a pair of drawers, and perspire violently, I then washed, perhaps

bathed, combed my head and beard, and then dressed.

" Then I used to go to the *Dur-khaneh* (literally, gate of the palace—ante-room) of the Firmaun Firmaee, (his father,) who, being informed of my arrival, would send for and converse with me upon matters of business, instruct me on what was to be done, what collections to be made, the troops or *gholaums* to be disposed of and despatched; for, to say the truth, I was the efficient person,—*Ism ba wó bood,—Resm ba mun;* the name of authority was with him, the exercise of it with me. Then in came the rest of the princes; after a while the pillaws, and down we all sat to breakfast. After breakfast we all went home; and then, Saheb Fraser, I used to retire to my *anderoon*, and sleep, perhaps, until the afternoon. Then, when I came out again, there were my own affairs to attend to, or perhaps we went out and took a ride; and, after returning, I sat in public, and transacted business until the hour of dinner. Then came the hour of enjoyment with my brothers or cousins; or perhaps I went into my harem, and had my women to serve me and amuse me.

Ah! Saheb Fraser, the time went merrily by: *ai Wahi! ai Wahi!* And then," continued he, "there were our hunting parties and our pleasure parties: ah! Irân is the place for these; and, of all Irân, what is there like to Fars! Ah! what a *Mamleket* (country)!—what water, what air! — what verdure, what fruits! — And then, for game,—*Penah bur Khoda!*—the mountain partridges are thicker than sparrows, and the deer are like flocks of sheep! — but, Saheb Fraser, it needs a *man* to take them, — ay, and a horse too. Ah, what horses we had! they did not run, they flew; there were no horses in Irân or Arabistan like ours! The Shah, you know, got his best horses from us, and we took care to keep a few to ourselves: my father, the Firmaun Firmaee, had twelve thousand brood-mares in his pastures;—think of that, Saheb Fraser! twelve thousand mares!

"Well! away we used to go to some of the plains that were full of deer,—perhaps, with five hundred good horsemen; and our people would find us out some pleasant place where there was shelter and plenty of grass: and, when we came home with our game, there would we

sit, and cut up the deer with our own hands, and make such kebaubs!—And as for wine,—ah! you know the wine of Sheerauz,—and we had the best of it, to be sure: for each of us there was never less than two *jouingees* (glass bottles holding at least half a gallon a-piece); and we thought nothing of him who should leave a drop of that; ay, and a good bottle of *arrak* (spirits) to boot, perhaps; and we had champagne and madeira also, from Busheer. Ah! those were the days of enjoyment!"

At another time he would describe to me the habits and customs of the Shah with his family, when they were assembled around him; and, from the great number of his children and grand-children, it was seldom that he had not such a family party. "There is always," said he, "a large ante-room beyond that in which the Shah sits, when he comes from the women's apartments; it is called the *Tumbel-khaneh*, or lounging-room, because all those in waiting here lounged and lolled at their ease: and there was a certain lady, one of his majesty's wives, named Sumbool Khânum, who had charge of it, and was therefore called

*Malikeh-e-Tumbel-khaneh*, or mistress of the lounging-room. Here all the princes used to assemble until the king made his appearance in the chamber of reception and of eating. Here too is the haunt of the *Gholaum-batchehs*, or pages, who are always full of mischief, with their demure countenances, and delight to play tricks on the princes who come here,—such as stealing their slippers, hiding their cloaks, and so on,—knowing that there is little fear of detection or punishment.

"The king, when he issued forth, used to utter a loud *Yah ullah!* which was well known to us all; and his majesty was always preceded by six peishkhidmuts carrying silver candlesticks, and attended by a crowd of menials of all sorts. His majesty then walked gravely to the high corner or place of state, where it was his wont to sit; took his place with becoming gravity, repeatedly stroking his fine long black beard, while muttering his religious sentences, and perhaps taking a single long whiff of his *calleeoon*. After a while the cloth was laid upon the carpet, and the trays of silver and gold, covered with shawls and

gold brocade, filled with all sorts of pillaws and good things, which first had, according to custom, been paraded in the *Tumbel-khaneh*, were borne in by the peishkhidmuts in due order, and arranged in seemly fashion under the directions of the same lady of the *Tumbel-khaneh*. This duty of the peishkhidmuts is by no means so simple or easy as you might think, for there is a prescribed mode of presenting the dishes and trays to great men, which must not be deviated from; and a peishkhidmut is considered to be a master of his business exactly in so far as he executes these duties of etiquette in a perfect or imperfect manner. He must hold the *douree*, or tray, straight out in his arms; and, kneeling down, must place it on the *sofra* (cloth) exactly in the prescribed position, without permitting it to decline at all from the horizontal, so that nothing may be spilled: and, as these trays are often very heavy, you may imagine that it is not every one who can perform the duty with grace and with correctness. I remember a laughable accident, connected with this duty, which happened at Sheerauz, in the presence of my late

father, the Firmaun Firmaee. An entertainment had been given to his royal highness by a Moollah of that place, and great preparations had been made for it. The hour had arrived; the Firmaun Firmaee had taken his seat, the cloth was spread, the candles ranged in order, and nothing remained wanting but the food. It is the custom, when a private individual entertains a prince, that he brings in the first dish or tray himself, and sets it before his guest. Now the Moollah was old and little, and on this occasion the tray was large and heavily loaded with good things; but bring it in he would, and in the proper style too. So in he walked, half-hid behind his great *douree*, and advanced with all due solemnity to the upper end of the room, where sat the Firmaun Firmaee. '*Afereen, afereen!* bravo, bravo!' said my father as the old man approached; but, before he reached the place, the weight became too much for him, the tray began to totter, and finding it going, yet resolved not to relinquish his hold, he called out, 'Ai Firmaun Firmaee! ai Firmaun Firmaee! help, help! or it will all be over upon you;' upon

which, my father, who saw what was coming, jumped up like a deer, and caught the tray so cleverly, that not a thing was spilt between them: they set it down safely, and a hearty laugh we all had at the affair, in spite of our respect for my father; but the poor Moollah was sadly ashamed and out of countenance.

"But there was a still more ludicrous occurrence happened in the presence of several of the princes who were entertained by a friend of mine. He was a Khan of high rank, and prided himself upon the excellence and good arrangement of his establishment. His head peishkhidmut was a very respectable man, and a most important personage, with a beard almost as long as that of Futeh Allee Shah himself. In bringing in the dinner, this peishkhidmut carried the tray that was to be placed before the elder princes; and as he advanced, and knelt down to set it on the cloth, one of the candles, which had been wrong placed, and which his burthen prevented him from seeing, set his fine beard in a blaze. What was to be done? Throw down the tray, he could not; that would have ruined his character for ever:

and yet, to place his burthen on the cloth with due decorum, with his beard burning all the time, how was that to be managed? There was a large bowl of *mâs*, or sour milk, in the tray, for eating with the pillaws and vegetables; and into this, with admirable presence of mind, by a motion of his head he dipped his flaming beard at the same time he set down the dish; and, recovering himself, stood up in the proper attitude of respect, with the *mâs* streaming from his chin. All burst out into a laugh, but the man stood perfectly grave and unmoved; and the elder prince exclaimed, '*Afereen, afereen!* well done, well done, such a one! your face is white this day. By your head! Khan, that man deserves a khelut, and a khelut he shall have.' It was a capital scene I assure you.

"Well, Saheb Fraser, when the dinner is all duly set forth, the Shah, after washing his hands in a golden basin, with water poured from a jewelled ewer, and wiping them with a gold embroidered handkerchief, would utter a loud *Bismillah!* (grace,) and begin to dip his fingers into the good things, first into this dish

and then into that; and after making trial, as it were, to ascertain what was best, he would ask, 'Where are the princes? let them come in.' In a moment all the princes would start up at this, and, as if it were Devil take the hindmost! repair with their utmost speed to their proper places at the cloth. These were all known. Abbas Meerza, when present, as first in rank, would sit next his majesty, but yet with a space between. When he was absent, the Firmaun Firmaee, or Hassan Allee Meerza, his brother, would take that place; and the rest in succession, according to age and rank, to the amount often of an hundred or more. When all were standing duly and respectfully in their places, another signal from his majesty would make them sit down, which was always done with the greatest ceremony and decorum, each keeping his eye reverently turned on the 'centre of the universe.' During this time his majesty would continue still picking a bit, until, all being in order, he would look up and give a nod, as much as to say, 'Fall to!' on which in a moment every man's hand was in the dish next him; with which he

was forced to content himself, for there was no stretching or scrambling before the king. But here the lady of the *Tumbel-khaneh* would come to their assistance, and happy were those who were well with her; for her duty at this period of the business was to stalk up and down upon the *sofra* or cloth, clad in 'tights,' so that her garments should not interfere with the dishes, and with a wand of office resembling a shoe to help those who required it. And there used to be, I assure you, no small manœuvring to catch this lady's eye, in order to procure through her means a share of some tit-bit or favourite pillaw. This lady was never without her favourites, and could always do them a good turn, by placing near their station an extraordinary portion of good things; whereas those who had the misfortune to offend her had often to content themselves with a little sour milk and bread.

"In the mean time a number of the Shah's women used to enter, each making the salam, and ranging themselves like statues in mute and moveless silence round the hall, every eye turned to the lord of all this state. Some

favourite lady of late years, oftenest the *Taje-u-Dowlut*, would be called to sit behind the king, embracing his body while he was eating, patting and caressing him with her hands crossed upon his breast. With one of these his majesty would often play, and sometimes with her neck; at other times he would amuse himself by cramming large handfuls, made up of all sorts of eatables, into her mouth, over his own shoulder. To do justice to these was no easy matter, for the Shah's *lougmeh*, or handful, was one of the largest in his dominions; and the poor *Taje-u-Dowlut* used often to complain of them." I asked the prince here, whether all this went on before this huge assembly of sons, grandsons, and menials of all sorts; to which he replied by assuring me that it did,—that it was the usual custom.

"Well, Saheb Fraser," continued he, "the princes all this time would eat in perfect silence, not daring to utter a word to one another; the Shah would speak occasionally to the eldest prince at his side, but that was all. After a certain time, which custom had fixed, this eldest prince, whoever he might be, would

give a sort of signal to those near him, who always rose at once, whether they had finished eating or not, and none could continue sitting after this: up they must get; were their hand in the choicest dish, or their fingers on the sweetest morsel, left it must be; and all, bowing profoundly, must leave the presence, holding, as best they might, their greasy unwashen paws, — for there is no washing before the king, but in the ante-chamber there are always a parcel of the king's women in waiting with basins and ewers, for the purposes of ablution after meals.

"The king would often continue picking and eating for half an hour after the princes went, for he was a great feeder; and, dinner being concluded, he would smoke a *caleeoon*, and rising with another great *Ya ullah!* retire, as he came, to his anderoon, where, getting his women about him, he would remain for some time. Frequently he used to send for some of the princes again, who in that case sat down with him, and spoke when they were spoken to, while the favourite ladies still continued to be present. Then it was often his majesty's

custom to send for cards, at which he played with the princes, contriving always to win. It was a rule on such occasions, that, whatever money was staked, ten per cent. of it went as a *droit* to the king, who used to put it in a large vessel of green agate, in the shape of a duck with an opening in its belly. Thus, independant of the bets he always made, and which his opponents were too good courtiers to win, by frequent changing from one hand to another, the coin must all, sooner or later, go into the maw of this voracious duck; and then, when his majesty had cleaned them all out,—some losing two hundred tomauns, others five hundred, and some a thousand,—the old gentleman would crow over them; and, shaking and weighing this same duck in his hands, would exclaim with a loud chuckle, 'Aha! the king's bird has been fortunate to-night, it has gained a grand victory; *Mashallah!* the king's luck is high!' and then off would all the poor fellows go with their fingers in their mouths, leaving his majesty highly contented with his plunder." I was but too happy when I could beguile the princes into gossip such as this,

which made many a dull hour slip by; and were my memory more perfect than it is, or had I at all times been able to note down what passed at such times, I might have made up a very pretty volume of "Persiana."

Time, however, did not stand still; nor did their business, although it might not progress with a rapidity commensurate to their wishes. On the 3rd of August their royal highnesses had the honour of a private audience with his majesty; an attention which was as deeply felt as it was graciously and kindly vouchsafed. Nothing, indeed, could be more gracious than their reception, or more gratifying to the princes than the assurances which were given by the royal lips, of the interest which his majesty took in the welfare of personages who had so frankly put their trust in the royal generosity and protection: while, on the other hand, the elder prince repeated to his majesty, in person, those expressions of gratitude which he felt, and had often before expressed, for the kindness and hospitality they had already experienced; a kindness which had commenced, he declared, from the

first moment they had felt themselves under protection of the British flag, at Gibraltar, and which was now perfected in the happiness which they derived from the sight of his majesty's august countenance. It was an omen of a happy future, — a proof that all their misfortunes were at an end; and that, *Inshallah!* through the continued favour of his majesty, everything hereafter should go well with them. I need not add that they left the presence highly delighted with their audience.

## LETTER XV.

AMONG the excursions which the princes made at this time, there was none they more enjoyed than a visit to Hayleybury College. Accompanied by Meerza I. we drove down to that gentleman's house, close to the college; where, like birds uncaged, they ran wild about the garden, falling upon the green apples with the eagerness of children, nor could all my remonstrances prevent them from gormandizing a quantity which I felt certain must make them ill. The Wali and Timour Meerza, collecting a parcel of large apples, set to work; and, bruising them till they burst, filled the cracks with pepper and salt and parsley-seed, and so devoured them raw: after such feats the good Wali wonders that he is ill, and complains of the climate and air of London as the cause!

Proceeding to the college, they were received by the principal, and most of the professors, together with the ladies of their families, among whom their quick eyes failed not to discover some "very pooty" individuals, according to their newly acquired English phrase, which, truth to say, they have learned to enunciate very prettily. "Ah, very pooty!" "Ha' d'ee do?" and "I hope you are qvite well," were now made use of when introduced to any new acquaintance; and the last especially, often whether applicable or not: nor did they spare their stock of English on the present occasion.

After coffee and liqueurs we adjourned to see the college; but the fine walk in front of it, and the fine Eastern MSS. in the library, were the only objects that had much attraction for them until dinner, which was served early, in order to admit of their returning in good time to town. A capital dinner it was, and healths were drunk in good wine and good style, so that everything went on most pleasantly; and, after a cup of coffee at the Meerza's, we got into the carriage, and drove comfortably home. But so much are

these singular creatures dependent on excitement, and so apt, when that is wanting, to fall into gloomy reveries, that, even in the short interval between the termination of dinner and our arrival in London, they felt the uneasiness of exhaustion consequent on their exertion; and, when we stopped half-way to change horses, requested a few glasses of wine to wind them up again.

Another excursion, and it was among their last, was to Richmond, where we enjoyed a stroll in the park, and an excellent dinner at the Star and Garter. It was pleasant to see them letting themselves freely out, and, casting their cares away for a while, opening their hearts to the influences of the delicious day and the exquisite scene around them. The two younger played at the jereed with sticks they picked up in the park, to the great amusement of many lookers-on; and Timour scampered away like one of the deer around him. We were not the only party in the hotel; and after dinner Timour insisted on taking part with a juvenile troop, who, in high spirits, were playing a miniature game of cricket

in the garden before our windows. He rather spoilt their game, I believe; but, on the whole, I suspect the little fellows were better amused than if the interruption had not taken place.

On the whole, the day passed off with much success; and it was gratifying to see that they appreciated the charms of certainly one of the loveliest places in England.

Among the few other "sights" which they had an opportunity of seeing was the prorogation of parliament, which took place on the 20th of August. Everything possible was done for their accommodation, but to get them places in the part of the House of Lords appropriated to foreign ambassadors was not practicable; so that the eldest, fearful of being placed again in what he considered a position degrading to his rank, declined going altogether. The two younger went, and got places in one of the little stalls appropriated to the eldest sons of the nobility, where, contrary to the usages of the place, stools were given them to sit upon; yet, after all, even Timour Meerza asked me, with an upbraiding look, whether this was a place suited to their rank, and whether, in other circumstances,

I should have considered even *these* (looking at the gentlemen around him) as fit companions for him. I mention this to show how inveterately was this phantom fear of lowering their dignity engraved on their minds, and how much it often did, of necessity, interfere with their comfort. It often prevented them from witnessing what was interesting or agreeable, and cramped the motions of the eldest in particular so much, that he did not profit to a fourth of the extent he might, in the advantages to have been derived from his visit to England.

Both of the princes, on this occasion, took notice, with somewhat of a jealous expression, though veiled with a smile, of the preference given to the ladies, in point of accommodation and comfort, even over persons of the highest rank; and indeed the benches immediately above the bar were fully and fairly occupied. But I must do them all the justice to say, that greatly as our customs with regard to women differ from theirs, and strong as is the contrast between the position occupied by females in society here and in Persia, they never appeared to regard the ladies here as usurping a place beyond their

sphere, nor to entertain an idea of slight or disrespect towards them; on the contrary, they seemed to enter with remarkable readiness into our notions on these subjects, and adopt at once our feelings and our conduct towards the fair sex. Often did they hold forth to me upon the superiority of our ladies over theirs in education, and usefulness, and intellect; nor do I think that this strain, though possibly exaggerated after the Oriental fashion to gratify my national tastes, was by any means entirely assumed for that purpose. I believe, on the contrary, that they felt the superiority which they admitted, but could not fully comprehend; and that even if in a few individual cases they may have been surprised by a certain *étourderie*, or over frankness of manner, they quitted England with a high respect and admiration for our fair countrywomen in general, and strongly impressed with their grace, their affability, their accomplishments, and, above all, their virtue, and modest yet dignified demeanour.

As for the ceremony of the prorogation itself I do not know whether it made a strong impression or not, although the appearance of the

peers in their robes, and the pomp of the royal entry, were certainly not lost upon them; but Timour was mightily tickled with some parts and attributes of the ceremony, especially with the Lord Chancellor's wig, and those of the Speaker and clerks. He could not at all comprehend what might be the meaning of the ceaseless repetition of the words used in giving the royal assent to the various and numerous bills passed during the session; and the rush of the commons on their entry to hear the King's speech astonished and confounded them both, as well it might.

At length the arrangements of which their business and position were the object, were completed; a few official forms alone remained, and it became necessary to prepare for their journey. One of those preparations was to send off by sea certain of their servants who could not accompany them by land. The journey, both as a matter of expediency and to comply with their own wishes, was to be performed with all convenient speed; and, as some parts of it lay through countries where posting is difficult and horses scarce, it was an object to reduce the

number of carriages as much as possible. It was therefore arranged that the princes and their interpreter should occupy one four-seated carriage, while myself and the rest of the party proceeded in another, with one Persian and one European servant; the latter being a man well acquainted with travelling in the countries through which we had to pass.

One of the greatest plagues the princes had been teased with during their stay in London, was their Persian servants. They had been of little use; and, being constrained by no feelings of dignity or self-respect, had got into bad habits, and more than once into scrapes. At length, first one, and then the other, declared they would not leave London, to go wandering about, or return back to Persia or Arabia. London was a very good place, they said; and there they should remain. Now, one of these worthies was by trade a tailor, the other a cook; and their habits were as different as their professions. Tuckey, the cook, loved the English ale; beer was rather too weak for his stomach; and of this favourite beverage he took so much and so constantly that there were few

days in which he was not fuddled: how then could he quit dear London and its good liquor? The tailor, on the other hand, was a man for the ladies,—fond of the fair sex, although certainly his gloomy countenance and coarse figure would not, *à priori*, have seemed likely to captivate many of them: *he*, however, was not the less susceptible; and, having found some kind dame or dames to listen to his sighs, how could he leave London and its fair ones? He declared he would not: that he had entered into engagements with a master of his own craft, by which he was to get board, lodging, and good wages; what further and secret articles there might be, he was too good a politician to let out; but in London he took his stand. As for the cook, he stood by the ale; he had made no treaty,—entered into no articles but with his own stomach; but these were sufficient, he was equally obstinate. Time at length pressed, and the two recusants were ordered up to the presence; but both were found equally resolute in their determination,—give them a thousand tomauns apiece, go they would not. The princes were infinitely embarrassed; they did not like

to leave the men: what were the foolish creatures to do when they came to their senses, and found themselves adrift and helpless in a strange land? Besides, it would affect their own good name. They knew full well the tricks of their countrymen; these fellows would tell lies, and say that they, the princes, had brought them to England for their own convenience, and then turned them adrift to starve. The idea of such a slander was not to be endured. The affair had been canvassed long before, and my advice had been, that they should let the fellows go and shift for themselves; that when their money was gone, and they had no longer the hotel to fall back upon for food and shelter, they would be too glad to return and cry *Tóvah!* (I have sinned; forgive me!) But the prince had not enough of firmness to follow this advice; he feared they would get into scrapes, and that his name would be unpleasantly and degradingly brought into notice. The men, therefore, went on in their ways, and this was the result. I told them the affair must be decided by the next morning, as the men must start by noon in order to be in time for the next Mediterranean

packet; and the princes, together with the Meerza, had a stout night of expostulation and entreaty; their royal highnesses weakly expecting to succeed by the last with men who were reckless and headstrong, or had a point to gain, when more decided language had failed of effect. That night I was told, "all was right," they would go; the next morning, that "all was wrong," they would not go. Then, next, they were like buckets in a well,—when one was on, the other went off; and so the time was wasted till the hour had almost come. I told them now or never was the moment: time, tide, and steam waited for no man. I then found that money was the cry,—pay them their wages, and they would go. The princes wished to comply with the demand, and I produced the money. "Take it," said I to them, "if that is what you want, and then get into the coach which is at the door." So to it they went again,—princes, followers, and the poor Meerza, who had a sad time of it between the two parties. As for me, I merely stood aloof, watch in hand, to call "time!" At length all appeared to be settled,—I believe a bribe had

been resorted to; and sulkily and slowly did the fellows go to get their "traps," and I accompanied the tailor upstairs to quicken his motions, and for fear of his slipping through my fingers. Having seen his things thrown into the coach, and himself getting after them, I ran back to look after the cook. He had eloped, and was nowhere to be found. All the house was searched, but no Tuckey. "I dare say he is in the kitchen, sir," said one of the waiters; "I'll go and see." I followed to rouse him out, when, in threading a long passage on the way, I heard the brogue of dear Irân in a whining and growling key, and soon after recognised the voice of the Meerza remonstrating with some one. It was with the unlucky cook, who we believed had gone to collect his things, but who had quietly gone to the bath-room to take a warm bath, while we were cooling our heels upstairs; and the Meerza, by mere accident, in the course of his search had found him stripped and stepping in. My patience, both from feeling and on principle, was at an end, and I let Master Tuckey see it. I was fortunately able to deal him out

a good dose of his own country's delightful abuse, which I enforced with several emphatic shakes by the neck, and something very nearly approaching to a kick or two. Tuckey saw it would not do; so he gave up the bath and dressed, grumbling and *aé! Moossulmaun*-ing it, seemingly quite astounded, but also quite convinced, by this demonstration of English vigour. But I did not lose sight of him; he had his things yet to get, and up I went with him to the garret. On the way he bolted from me into the prince's room, where he began roaring and bewailing himself, and fell at the feet of the elder, lamenting his hard fate in being separated from the master whom, not ten minutes before, he had insisted obstinately and insolently upon quitting. "He was torn away from him,—from his dear master," he said. "God knew if he should ever see him more. You go by land," said he; "I, *kumbucht!*—unlucky dog! must go by water. You go to Constantinople, I to Falmouth! Where is the one, and where the other? *Ai Wahi! ai Wahi!*" and so he went on, blubbering and kissing the prince's feet, till I was forced once

more to interfere, declaring that there was not time for such displays. A little more "*douce violence*," however, was required to get him upon his legs, and I led him out of the room staggering and reeling, as much I think from drink as from grief; and then I had another scene upstairs, where, when he arrived, instead of at once bundling up his things, he threw himself down on the bed in a passion of tears.

At length I got him down stairs, guarding well the door of the room where the princes sat. But not so was he to pass the door of the sanctum within which sat the good Miss M——, who assailed him with much misplaced kindness, and tendered him what he liked far better — a large bumper of rum. Tuckey blubbered and drank; it soothed his deep distress: he shook hands with his late companions, gave another howl of distress, and entered the coach. When I got there, my other bird had fled. The buckets in the well again! Not daring to leave my prize, I begged the Meerza to go for the stray bird, who at length was caught: the door closed upon them; and, after giving the servant who was

to accompany them strict charge not to let them out until he took them on board the Falmouth steamer, I had the satisfaction to see them drive off.

Perhaps you may imagine that now the affair was terminated: not at all. In two hours after, when I returned to the hotel, I found all in confusion again. The tailor had returned on our hands, and the packet had doubtless sailed without him. Here was a pretty business! From his account it appeared that, when he had got down nearly to the vessel, he had missed a cloak, or something, and turned back to get it. It was no easy matter to discover who was in fault; nor was the doubt cleared up by the arrival of the servant, who swore that the man, when he attempted to stop him from getting out, got furious, and even drew his knife upon him; so what could *he* do? — and what had I left to do but to abuse the man, and swear that he should pay the tailor's fare to Falmouth, whither of course he must be sent with all speed by that evening's mail? But this was managed by the party at Mivart's themselves, for I declared

I would have nothing more to do with the matter, — the man might go, or stay, for me. He was sent, however; and so the business ended.

And now "all was accomplished," the carriages prepared and packed, the — whole arrangements complete, when lo! Timour Meerza, who had yet to pay the price of his childish excesses in diet, like the Wali, and who had been for some days a little out of order, was seized violently ill, and thus did the journey experience a further delay. Even the Wali himself was by no means in high health; so that, when the convalescence of the former permitted us to start, it was still held prudent, if not necessary, to make two days' work, instead of one, of the road to Dovor. At length, the 3rd of September was finally fixed upon as the day for our departure; and, after an early and hasty breakfast, the carriages came to the door. The leave-taking was, I assure you, a scene fit for a novel. During a sojourn of nearly three months, the good-humour, affability, and kindheartedness of their royal highnesses had gained them the hearts of every one in the

excellent hotel where they resided, in spite of all whims and trouble: even the whole neighbourhood felt an interest in persons whose exits and entrances, and foreign customs and dress, had so often called them to their windows; and their departure created a sensation not very usual in any part of London, and especially at a hotel which is constantly filled with comers and goers of distinction. Several of their friends too, even at so early an hour, had come to bid "God speed" them; so that among the crowd which had assembled both in doors and out, and even at the windows of the houses around, there were many that took a sincere interest in the occasion. Within, there was no end to the embracing and shaking of hands; the ladies were in tears, — almost in hysterics; the princes, between excitement and sympathy, almost as bad. Who can leave even the prison where he has passed many days, without casting a look of feeling behind him! "Who can say the word 'adieu!' without emotion, or look unmoved, for the last time, at familiar scenes!" says somebody, or something like it. The princes could not: they were dying

to leave London, — to return to their families, — but they had been happy there; they were weary even of their handsome lodgings, — but they had experienced kindness in them, spent some happy hours; and as for the ladies of the establishment, — there was something more than mere acquaintance to break off: in short, they were very tender-hearted, and it was a most moving business. But all things must have an end: the last hand was shaken; the last — no, perhaps not *last* tear shed; with difficulty we forced our way through the crowd that thickened round the carriages. In got the princes, — the door was shut, — Adieu! adieu! and away we went down Bond-street, along Piccadilly, by Regent-street, for the last time. "Ai London! Ai London!" said the prince, more than once, as he looked his last at its superb streets and shops, which he might never again behold; but the whips cracked, — the posters sprang forward, — Westminster Bridge was passed, and London left behind us.

As for me, my first thought was of thankfulness that at length we had made our start; for, according to the common saying, "a thing

well begun is half ended." My next, was a recollection of the last time I travelled this road, and a rapid mental comparison of the circumstances of that occasion with those of the present: how busy had been the interval! — how many changes had it produced! How vain to speculate upon the distant future, when even over the events of a year — of a day, — no one possesses the smallest control!

Well, — on we drove: in due time we changed horses at Dartford, and in a gloomy, unlovely afternoon reached Sittingbourne, where capital accommodations and an excellent dinner, at the George Inn, made us all comfortable, and prepared even the invalids for their next day's easy journey.

Next morning, after a good breakfast, we started, with an air rendered delicious by a heavy fall of rain in the night, for Canterbury. Of this prettily-situated town, however, we saw little, as we only drove into the hotel-yard, and, changing horses, drove out of it again, and right on to Dovor.—Dovor! rendered interesting to me by so many recollections, who could have guessed when, but fifteen months

before, I reached thee after so many wanderings, that in so short a time I should revisit thee with such a charge, and on such an errand?

We put up at the Ship Inn, where it was immediately obvious that the price of our accommodations was to be measured by our rank rather than their excellence, and that we were to pay at least "*en prince*;" for our bill was far higher than at the George on the preceding evening, though there we had far better rooms, food, and attendance: in fact, the charges were higher than at Mivart's. No wonder that foreigners of rank complain of their first reception in this respect on English ground, when even the natives cannot escape.

We were informed that the packet was to sail either at five in the morning, or at three the next day, and resolved to regulate ourselves by the weather, which was not altogether promising. Poor Wali! The windows of the apartment looked out upon the sea; and he sat gazing at it, suffering by anticipation all the misery which he dreaded on the passage. Had there been a possibility, by any sacrifice of toil or time, to get out of England by land, he

would not have scrupled at consenting to make it. During one of the last conversations held upon the subject,—I forget in whose presence, —when the plan of a sea voyage was again discussed, and its advantages set forward, the Wali, to whom I was explaining what had been said, cut me short: "Your words are useless," said he; "the truth is this,—no force will make me go by sea. Were it a question of walking with naked feet among thorns for a thousand fursungs, I would do it; but go by sea, I will not!" But the Wali had learned to look at maps, and he knew that England being an island, there was no way but one to get out of it to the Continent; and so he had to make up his mind to cross from Dovor to Calais, being the shortest passage to be found. But even of this he talked with a horror which moved certainly as much of contempt as of pity. The rest, although almost, if not quite equal sufferers with him, said less; and, I believe, thought less about it. Still all hated the sea; and the stormy look of the evening, as the night came on, was but poor comfort to them.

Sept. 5th.

It blew a gale all night, and therefore no packet sailed, and the people came to tell us this at four in the morning; so, instead of the satisfaction of rising in a cold raw morning by candle-light, we had just the trouble of going to sleep again, which we did most successfully achieve, and lay till eight, by which time the weather had much improved. Yet the sea still looked black enough, and seemed to reflect its colour on the poor Wali, who lay curled up in a knot in a corner of the sofa, covered with his black abba. As the sun broke out, however, he unwreathed himself, but looked just like a child going to take physic. He asked me whether there were berths in the packet for people to lie down upon the moment they got on board, and plenty of *basins*. I eased his mind on those heads by promising him a berth, and telling him that he should have half a dozen basins at his command, if he thought his case would require it. The day passed heavily enough; for, though some of the party walked about, the princes moped in their chamber till the time of sailing, which, in spite of their

anticipated sufferings, they were impatient for.

It appeared, however, that they were not to leave England at last without a parting tribute of interest and regard; for, when the hour of embarkation came, the whole pier was crowded with spectators, and they received the warm adieus of several friends whom chance had brought to Dovor at the time. At a few minutes after three we went on board; but so lazy was the tide, that it was half-past four before the vessel floated and we could get out of the harbour. The wind was fresh, and, together with the run of the tide, kicked up a sharp sea. The elder prince sat on deck for some time rather triumphantly; but, when he began to feel affected by the motion, he rose, and staggered along the deck to his carriage, where, according to the captain's advice, he took up his position. The Wali had at once taken up a recumbent berth, and Timour Meerza soon followed his example. Others also retired to their carriages, leaving the deck to those who had none, or who dreaded the miseries of the cabin more than exposure above.

Some laid themselves down on cloaks and sails, in hopes of escaping the enemy by assuming that lowly posture; but a row of heads over the lee gunwale, like a string of beads, soon proclaimed his power upon deck, as the sounds of woe and the numerous basins that ascended from the cabin did below. These sights and sounds, most ticklish to a ticklish stomach, were to be seen in every part of the vessel; for, though she behaved beautifully, the passage was a rough one. The condition of one poor young creature of high rank and great beauty made my very heart sore. There she lay, stretched in the after-cabin, like some beautiful piece of sculpture, still, and pale as death, till some heavy swell or other cause brought on a fiercer paroxysm of the deadly sickness, and forced her to spring up with a cry, and to commence a tearing fit of retching. Alas! to no effect. I saw another lady, after braving it long, led like a ghost down to the cabin, unable to drag one leg after another; in short, it was a miserable business, as usual. "These be thy triumphs, sea!" thought I, as I viewed the prostrate and sorely harassed multitude:

"what wonder is it that the poor princes dread thy very sight!" The interpreter was worse, if possible, than they; he shouted and roared, and ejaculated for mercy in all languages, I believe, in the agony of his sufferings. The rest of the party managed better; and I, considering my tendency in these latter days to succumb to the enemy, stood it out more stoutly than I expected. In fine, after two and a half or three hours of bitter misery, we were duly ejected from our aquatic prison upon the quay of Calais, and soon well lodged in Monsieur Dessein's most comfortable hotel.

At first all hands professed that they required nothing in the way of food, nothing but rest—that to eat was out of the question; but after our stomachs had settled for an hour, we contrived to get down a pretty satisfactory meal. The princes took theirs in their chamber, where they got hot water and lemons, and a variety of trash, and made an extraordinary mess.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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# NARRATIVE

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OF THE

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# NARRATIVE

## OF THE RESIDENCE

OF THE

# PERSIAN PRINCES IN LONDON,

IN 1835 AND 1836.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR

## JOURNEY FROM PERSIA,

AND SUBSEQUENT ADVENTURES.

By JAMES BAILLIE FRASER, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "TRAVELS IN KHORASAN," "THE KUZZILBASH,"
"THE PERSIAN ADVENTURER," &c.

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1838.

# RESIDENCE OF THE

# PERSIAN PRINCES IN LONDON.

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I HAVE not yet told you that, believing the journey on the whole was likely to be a pleasant and an easy one, I had asked and obtained permission to fill the vacant place in my carriage with the person of Mrs. F., who, disappointed of another trip which had been determined on, was not sorry to change it for a journey to Constantinople. In lieu of a female servant, she preferred taking her sister, who was not less fired with the thought of visiting that interesting quarter; and, as the ladies of course kept journals, I shall occasionally relieve the heaviness of my own lucubrations, by inserting some of their remarks, which will have, at all events, the freshness of first impressions.

" Sittingbourne, Sept. 3rd.

" FORTY miles from London, and I begin to feel that we are really on our journey, and, please God! to reach Constantinople, if life and health be spared us. The princes met us, on alighting, in the parlour, and were very pleasant: the eldest has a delightful expression, so sweet and benevolent that no one would believe he could either cut off noses or pluck out eyes. He said to me, 'Now that Mrs. F. is come with us, all will go well.' We all dined together; Prince Reza Kolee handed me to table, and sat next me during dinner! I felt at first as if I would rather we had dined alone; but, ere half the dinner was over, we were all quite at ease. They are so frank and sweet with their little English phrases; and between Mr. F. and the interpreter Assad we get on finely. But assuredly it is a strange situation: what should I have said some ten or twelve years ago, had any one told me that I should find myself travelling to Constantinople in company with three Persian princes!

"Dovor, 5th.

"We reached this place yesterday, and hoped to have crossed at four in the morning; but it has been so stormy that they tell us we must wait till three to-day. I doubt not the princes hugged themselves on their reprieve. The Wali looks most wretched, and Prince Timour is far from well. Yesterday morning, however, notwithstanding he had taken medicine, he ate a most wonderful breakfast, of mutton chops, and omelette, and fowl, and rice, all mixed together, with lemon squeezed over it. They devour lemons: no wonder he is ill; the wonder will be if he is not worse. Nevertheless, we had a very pleasant dinner. The princes were all in spirits at the feeling of having commenced their journey: even 'melancholy Jacques,' the Wali, talked, and almost laughed at my attempts at Persian words, and at the prince's English. The night had not at this time begun to be overcast, and their fears for the passage were not yet awakened. This forenoon, tired of staring out of the window at the sea, they betook themselves to sleep, to wile away the time.

" Calais, 6th.

" HERE, thank God! in Dessein's capital inn. We embarked yesterday afternoon, in view of a perfect crowd of spectators who lined the pier, among whom were several of the princes' London friends, who came up with the kindest greetings and wished every blessing on their path. It blew very hard, but was fine; so I felt quite well and bold, sitting beside the prince and Timour, who laughed and talked abundantly. As for the Wali, he made off at once to his lair below, determined from the first to be sick, while we as strenuously resolved to keep well: but it was all the same in the end,—no one was better than another. It got so rough, that, to avoid being drenched with spray, A. and I soon betook ourselves to the carriage. Presently the steward came to suggest the expediency of having a basin for our companion; but we scouted him away, assuring him that *we* never required such things. So A. fell vigorously to her Journal, and I to my books: but very soon the letters got too confused for my eyes, and the pen too heavy for A.'s fingers; so down went the window, and

I had but just time to roar for the despised basin, and get hold of it, when it was wanted. Thank Heaven! it was not very prolonged misery, for in little more than two hours and a half we were safe in the harbour of Calais.

"It was too late to clear our things at the custom-house that night; but, on our passports being seen, permission was most politely given to have what was required for comfort. So up the pier we trudged, followed by the crowd, I leaning on the prince's arm, as Mr. F. was otherwise employed. A coach was immediately prepared, and, before Mr. F. could return, the prince had seated us both in it: up then got he and the rest, and away we all drove to Dessein's; they chattering at a great rate, although none of us knew what the others would be at. They then had recourse to their few words of English, and it came out that this earnest appeal to me was to use my influence with Mr. F. not to put them again into a ship. So the whole three began, 'Mrs. F. you—Saheb F. no go ship—no go sea—no go black sea—no no ship—ship *bud budder*—ship no good—carriage good.—You, Mrs. F.

tell Saheb F. no go — no go :— go carriage.' Really it was a curious scene; and the suddenness of the change, and singularity of the situation, might well have made us ask ourselves whether it was not all a dream."

September 6th.

In the morning I found that the princes had been in sad commotion all night. The roll and tumble of the vessel had stirred up the Wali's bile, and he had taken some medicine, which had used him in a terribly rough way.

We had heard a great ringing of bells, and a mighty stir all night in their room, which was next to ours; so, about four in the morning, I went in to inquire what could be the matter. I found the whole party assembled around the Wali's bed, who was groaning and lamenting sadly; and the waiter and a very pretty *fille de chambre* earnestly seeking to be of use, but sadly at a loss to comprehend any one of them, the interpreter included. The waiter said he had been up with them for several hours, and he must have thought them a very strange set of people, for the room was in a terrible condition. I found the Wali

so much exhausted, that I feared we should scarcely have been able to continue our journey; but the rest were too impatient to get on, to brook delay: so they cockered him up with warm things after their own fashion; and after breakfast, and the business of the custom-house was over,—a matter which the civility of the officers rendered very easy,—we were enabled to start by half-past ten, and got on without any difficulty to St. Omer's. Here the poor Wali's pains recommenced, and we were forced to get him a room and foment his stomach with warm water, to which his brothers added a sound rubbing with olive oil.

When somewhat relieved, we again took the road, in hopes that the business was over; and, though the poor prince continued far from comfortable, we managed to get him into good quarters at Bailleul for the night.

Next day, the 7th, the Wali continuing better, we took an early breakfast, and were in our carriages a little before six. At Lisle, something requiring to be done to the wheels of the princes' coach, I thought it just as well that the Wali should see a medical man, by

way of precaution; and the doctor whom we called in ordered him a warm bath, which produced a very favourable effect. A draught of eggs, milk, and other stuffs, which was likewise prescribed, did less service; but, in fact, the Wali was a miserably bad patient, and gave no fair play either to medical men or their remedies. Not being ready for dinner with the rest, as they said, at Lisle, the princes had put up a quantity of bread and meat, to munch when they should get hungry; and the sick man, as it appeared, played his part with the others; so that when we reached Enghien, where we came to for the night, they were fit for nothing but to go at once to bed: it was the best thing, in fact, they could do.

A charming drive in a truly delicious morning brought us to Brussels by nine, on the 8th; but these villanous causeways,—it is few carriage wheels that can stand them with impunity, and the hind-wheels of the princes' coach, which was a comfortable but old vehicle, began to complain so much, that I resolved to have them put in thorough good condition here before starting afresh. The Wali, whose state

was not yet altogether satisfactory, would also be able to refit, and the rest of the party to take a view of "Belgium's capital."

The Wali, however, is a strange perverse being: far from well, though he confessed himself to be, it was with the greatest difficulty that I could prevail on him to see a medical man. "Why call in a doctor," said he, "when I won't take his medicines?"—"And why will you not?" said I. "I have no faith in them," said he; "your doctors here do not know hot things from cold; how can they do me good?" "Certainly," replied I, "our doctors do not practise according to your Persian rules: we in Europe put no faith in your distinction of remedies into hot and cold; we judge of medicines by their effects: what medical men know by experience relieves suffering in certain cases, they administer in all similar ones, and that is common sense. Now you want relief: either take such medicines as I shall venture to give you, or take the doctor's; or, if you will have neither, then prescribe for yourself; for something you must do, or we shall never get on."—"*Che-midanum*—what can I tell!" said

he, with a perplexed air: "if I were to drink a great caraffe of grape juice, I should be well, I am sure."—"Yes," replied I, "and probably soon at rest too, once for all, if that is the regimen you would follow."—"Ah," said he, "there it is; you won't believe me. What do you know about our temperament? your doctors here know nothing."—"Well," replied I, "that may or may not be; and if you had Persian doctors and Persian medicines here, you might employ them if you thought fit; but, as that is not the case, what will you do? you cannot remain as you are; say, what is to be done."—"Well, ah! I don't know;" and again he sat down in obvious perplexity. "Well," observed his brother, "but though you should not take his medicines, what harm can there be in allowing a doctor to see you?" "Why, where is the use of it when I don't believe a word he says?" This stupid bald sort of debate lasted so long that, quite worn out, I left him, and taking the elder prince aside, besought him to take his wayward brother in hand, representing how serious the consequences might be if matters were per-

mitted to go on as they were doing; that the journey might not only be delayed, but he might lose his brother on the way. The prince had good sense enough to see the truth of what I said: he went to his brother, and after a long and disagreeable altercation it was settled that a medical man should be sent for; and, strange enough to say, when the Wali had seen him, and heard what was advised, he made no objections to take his prescriptions; and the consequence was a material improvement in his health. I have told you this long story to show you what sort of creatures I had to do with, and that my charge was not an easy one, nor the duty I had to perform a sinecure.

In the mean time, we all went out to see the city, which is well worth the while; but there were two things in this afternoon's drive that seemed especially to strike the princes, and these were the cathedral and the hospital for old men and women. The neatness and good order of the last was perfect; and Timour was much amused by the collection of old bodies it contained, while the elder prince

readily applauded the benevolence which originated the institution, and seemed to think that, if ever he were in power again, it would be one of the things he should wish to imitate.

With the church the whole party were delighted; the pulpit, a rare chef-d'œuvre in carved wood, attracted great admiration. I have before observed that this style of ornament appears to suit their fancy. The beautiful painted windows too were much noticed, as well as the elegance of one of the chapels. On pointing out to Timour Meerza the fine altar-piece designed by Rubens, he asked who that figure above, with the beard, was designed for,—was it not *Huzrut Issaw?* (our Saviour.) I said no; it was intended to represent the Almighty. The scornful and irreverent laugh with which he received this piece of information startled some of our party, and those around us; I asked him why he laughed.—"The Almighty!" repeated he; "paint the Almighty! and under what likeness? that of an old man with a beard! Why not paint the wind? Can you do that? you can see it as well as the Almighty. Where is it, and where

is he? I will give any man twenty thousand tomauns for a handful of the wind, if he will bring it me!"

He was a good deal interested by the place of sepulture of those that fell in the late revolution and war with the Dutch; and the trees in the place before the hotel, torn and wounded by the shot, and still exhibiting marks of the fray, failed not to attract his particular notice: they are certainly striking memorials of a singular and bloody event.

In the evening we all went to the opera, where, by the kindness of Sir Hamilton Seymour, we were accommodated with the box of the English ambassador; but the performance, which was "Fra Diavolo," was far from being first-rate.

Next day, the 9th, until our carriage and the Wali should complete their repairs, we examined the palace of the Prince of Orange, which of its kind is certainly a curiosity, with its marble and granite lined walls, and its parquetted and inlaid floors so slippery that you are forced to slide along in worsted slippers; and its great saloon, with its cande-

labras, and six hundred candles. But the mode in which the place is shown is a mere mockery; for you are hurried along, suite after suite, covered and papered from view, so that the eye takes in nothing, and has no time to comprehend what may, without doubt, be very admirable, if we could but have leisure to see it. There are many fine pictures, but you must not go near them, lest, crossing the room, you should hurt the polish of the floor: nor must you make a stop at those which are within eye-shot, because you stop the company which have collected to be thus led through like a flock of sheep; and the time of Monsieur the Conducteur, or groom of the chambers, or whatever he may be, is precious, for he has another flock to conduct through the gorgeous maze, from whom, as from you, he expects a harvest of fees. I saw one splendid Rubens, worth, I should think, all the celebrated Titians which have cost our National Gallery so dear. As for the prince, as he sailed through the rooms, he frequently kept repeating "Ai Windsor, Windsor."

At three o'clock our party was ready. The

prince, instead of being anxious to pass another day at Brussels, was desirous of nothing so much as to get on; so, ordering horses, we drove to Tirlemont, where we took up our quarters for the night.

Sept. 10.—A delicious morning, with the first taste of autumnal sharpness and a fine bracing air, saw us early on foot. We walked up all the hills from choice, to enjoy the weather and the prospect; and Timour, who had been getting stronger and better every hour since he left London, in spite of sea-sickness, skipped and ran along like a young fawn, shouting aloud for very delight.

At Liege, being detained for a while for want of horses, we tried to take Timour Meerza and the interpreter on foot to see the town; but the crowd of idlers and blackguards, that collected round us at the sight of the foreign costumes, forced us to turn back and give up the attempt: never saw such a ragamuffin "tail" to any great or little man before! At Liege, again, the princes preferred ordering provisions into the carriage, to dining regularly at the hotel. Whether it was the

earliness of the hour, and consequent want of appetite, that made them prefer this, I do not know; but a wonderful mess they got together, —bread and cheese, roast fowls, raw onions, lemons, fruit, &c. &c.—and they kept picking at them all day. But they greatly enjoyed the fine country, always getting out to walk up the hills, stopping to babble at every little water-course and spring by the road-side, and shouting aloud to each other when anything attracted their attention. They were enchanted with finding a certain fine blue flower, common in Persia, and called the *Gool-e-cashnee*, growing all over the banks and fields; and, gathering a quantity, presented them to the party in the carriage.

The country was beautiful as long as we could see it on the way to Aix-la-Chapelle, where we arrived only at nine o'clock in the evening. It was not the Douane which detained us, for the officers gave us no trouble, nor did the business occupy twenty minutes; but the postilions drove ill, and storm and darkness overtook us long before we reached the frontier. The roads were good it

spite of the shaking causeways; but I never saw worse engineering than they display all through Belgium and this part of Prussia. The road all the way from Battice led us along the crest of a long elevated ridge, which we ascended, as it appeared, for the express purpose of descending again, although there was a valley on either hand in which the road might have been conducted.

Sept. 11.—The rain, which welcomed us to Aix, fell through the whole night; and we started in a heavy shower, holding on to Cologne, which we reached just in time for the table d'hôte. The princes sat looking at us from another room for some time, but after a little persuasion joined us. They did not much, however; and the Wali took an opportunity to tell me that his brother had a little bit of a quarrel with me, the grounds of which he would inform me of if I pleased. I begged that he would without scruple say what he had in his mind, as I had no object but their comfort in view, and should always be glad to hear how that might best be secured. The heads of offence proved to be these, so far

as they could be made intelligible:—In the first place, they complained that, in crossing from Dovor to Calais, I had not provided a vessel especially for their convenience, nor secured suitable accommodations in the packet which did carry them across. Secondly, they had some fault to find either with the fare provided for them, or with the times at which they were required to eat it, or with the manner of serving it up. And, thirdly, that there had been some mistake about persons being admitted to visit them without sufficient intimation being given for them to prepare for their reception. These charges were confirmed to me by the elder prince himself, who prefaced the detail by observing, that when there was any difference of opinion between friends, it was always best to speak out at once what was to be said, and not to hoard up ill-will. He said he saw that Saheb Fraser was *Bee-de-maugh*,—out of spirits,—and that probably the message he had sent by the Wali was the cause, but that now he would tell me all himself. I replied that it was the best course he could take; that when the Wali had any-

thing to complain of himself, I should be ready to hear him; but that when the Shahzadeh felt himself aggrieved, it was from his own mouth alone I wished to hear the matter.

After listening to all he had to say, I very easily proved to him how little I was to blame in any of the matters of which he complained. That, as to a private packet-boat, there were no such things ever thought of; and that the same steamer, and the same accommodations which he had, were those made use of by all our own nobility, and even princes, when travelling as he was. As to the complaints affecting the victualling department, I could not bring him to facts at all; and it seemed that the whole affair lay rather in the hours of eating, than in the food itself; these being contrary to their habits. I reminded him that, before commencing the journey, I had consulted with him about the hours of starting and of meals, and he confessed that such had been the case; but it was now agreed that, instead of breakfasting in the morning before setting out, when they said they had no appetite, a provision should be made the night

before, and placed in the coach at their disposal, to consume when hunger required it; that therefore we should no longer make any stop in the middle of the day, but take our principal meal at night. With regard to the admission of visitors, it turned out that the complaint referred to a circumstance which had occurred at Brussels. A short time before we left that city, an officer had been sent by the governor of the place to offer the princes a visit; this messenger, during the bustle preceding departure, had been shown by the waiter into the room where the princes were seated, lounging according to their custom, when not on ceremony. I did not know who this messenger was, nor his rank; so I just mentioned the fact of their royal highnesses being on the wing; and, knowing how unwelcome it would be to them, begged to decline his excellency's visit, acknowledging at the same time his polite attention. "Well," said the prince, "but what disrespect it was to permit the messenger to have access to our presence, without even being announced!" "Prince," said I, "reflect a little, and you will see how

unjustly you charge me with this neglect. At the moment he entered the room, you know I was engaged in hearing the doctor's final directions about the Wali; I could attend to nothing else then; and I conceive you can hardly intend to make me accountable for the blunder of every careless or ignorant waiter." He acknowledged that this also would be unreasonable, and stipulated only for a general charge to be given at such places as we might halt at, not to permit any one to approach the presence without leave asked and obtained. I then put an end to a long and very needless conversation, by assuring the prince that not only was it my duty, according to my instructions, but my wish from regard to himself and his brothers, to afford him every comfort, and secure to him all due respect as far as might lie in my power. That, however, we were now no longer in England, where all things were at his disposal on a wish being expressed: that, when I should request him to tell me what things he desired to have, he must not suppose, as he seemed inclined to do, that it was from any wish to limit him in matters of

expense; on the contrary, that it was entirely for the purpose of supplying every want; for though certainly I should hold myself to blame were I causelessly to squander the public money, yet my orders were to supply his royal highness with every comfort. That we were now going through countries where his accommodations would be very different from what he had hitherto been accustomed to, and all that I could promise was to procure him the best; but that he must rely on my word and exertions, and not be always imagining that, because his comforts might be diminished from a change of country, I must necessarily be to blame.

The prince said that this was all very good, —that every country had its own customs: in Persia, a guest, with himself for instance, never required to ask for anything,—all was provided for him in abundance, leaving nothing to desire; in Europe it might be different. "And how, prince," replied I, "did you find things at Mivart's, during your whole stay in London? Was there anything then left you to desire? were not amusements and every com-

fort pressed on your acceptance? had you not then all that money could procure?" The prince acknowledged that all this was true. "Then that should at least be a proof of my good-will to you, prince. But this is not London; and a very little reflection ought to show you how impossible it must be, in every change of place and scene, to make arrangements that shall not sometimes infringe upon your comfort, if, indeed, we are to get on at all with our journey; and it follows that, however much you may dislike being appealed to on such subjects, I must, in order to do my duty towards you, sometimes consult you with a view to supplying your wants." The "palaver" closed in a perfectly amicable way; and not the less so, that his royal highness saw that not only had I the right side of the argument, and he the wrong, but that I was determined to keep it so.

The whole of this affair was very much *à la mode de Perse*, and a little in the same strain as the remonstrance with me on the occasion of the East India Company's dinner. They think that here, as in Persia, there must be

an eternal struggle to maintain their consequence; and that, unless the subject is wakened now and then with a breeze, it is apt to go to sleep, and slide down hill. I was sure that after this squall the atmosphere would clear up again, and so it happened indeed; for, as if to make up for his silly pettishness, the poor prince was even more anxious than before to make himself agreeable, and more easily pleased with all that occurred.

## LETTER II.

We slept that night at Bonn, having passed the flat country from Cologne in rather gloomy weather. On the following day, a little after six, we started, with a morning which threatened and smiled by turns as we rolled on towards Andernach; but it cleared up charmingly as we approached the more interesting points of the road, and we were delighting ourselves with the lovely country, when, on bowling along the level ground towards Coblentz, we observed bodies of troops in movement upon the plain. Rumours of certain reviews of the Prussian troops in this neighbourhood had reached us on our way hither, and it appeared not only that these rumours were well founded, but that we had actually got into the thick of the business; for, on nearing the plain, I saw that it was covered with multitudes of armed men. It was a beautiful sight. In some places, the whole

surface was whitened and glittering with their bayonets; in others, dark masses stood still as thunder clouds, or moved and marched in splendid military order. We stood looking at them for some time, when the prince, who was always nervously afraid of being recognised, or meeting with some *shahzadeh* or other on terms that to him seemed derogatory, though delighted with the spectacle, began to get uneasy, for the troops were now evidently moving towards their tents, which whitened the ground a few miles off; so we too moved on slowly with the marching columns. These, soon crossing the fields, entered the road, and we thus had a fine opportunity of seeing even the detail of their infantry and light cavalry to the best advantage. They appeared to me by far the best equipped, best ordered, best looking, and most purpose-like troops I have ever seen, after our own. The men were unexceptionable; their clothes exceedingly handsome, well-made, and well-worn; and their arms and accoutrements in the best possible order. Their whole appearance was soldierlike, smart, and good. I saw no manœuvres, but they marched well.

The cavalry, chiefly lancers, looked equally well; their horses not quite equal to the men; but even they, though small, were stout, serviceable beasts. The officers had a more gentlemanly air in my eyes than those either of the French or Belgian army. On the whole it was a most interesting sight, and I thought ourselves most fortunate to catch it; for it is not every day that one can see more than thirty thousand of the finest troops in Europe collected together in array.

We paid for our sight at the hotel in Coblentz, not only in indifferent fare and bad attendance, but in detention for want of horses. All the food, and all the service of the house, was monopolized by the table d'hôte for the heroes of the review, so that we could scarcely get an article to eat: nor was there a private room to be had; every hotel, and even every house, was full; and it was with great difficulty I obtained permission for the princes to sit in a room of a private house, whose owner was a connexion of the master of the hotel. Well pleased we all were when horses were at last procured, and we drove on to St. Goar, where

again we were forced to halt for want of horses, and in fine to come to for the night.

On the whole, we had this day a very delightful drive. Independent of all sights, you may well comprehend the pleasure we must have felt in bowling along the banks of the Rhine, on good roads and in a fine day. These banks, however, though assuredly very beautiful, are I think quite enough lauded. Except in one part, they are monotonous in point of height and contour; and it is, rather, to the quick succession of picturesque towns and villages,—the signs and tokens of happiness and plenty, the traces of the hand of man, and the images of comfort and refinement presented to the mind, — that they owe their chief charm, than even to the castles so numerous and celebrated. These, as has been more than once remarked, I think, are too *petite,* and too much placed as if on purpose for effect. To test the truth of this opinion, let any one who knows the Rhine imagine its banks in a state of nature; no magnificent forests,—mere brushwood;—no towns nor sparkling villages,—only here and there a brown frowning castle; I

think he will feel that the whole affair will then dwindle into what indeed must be always an imposing object, — a fine river sweeping swiftly to the ocean. But where would be its loveliness? Gloomy castles upon craggy rocks, and the roar of a swollen stream, may be all very fine in a novel; but in real life, I take it, the smiling villages and gay towns, and "the sound of the church-going bell," are the things we love to see and to hear. It is a pity that the road is in many places so shut in with fruit-trees and orchards that the view of many of the most beautiful points and objects which he is passing is hid from the land traveller; I should vote for having most of these cut down. Yet still, even with this disadvantage, I am not sure that he does not enjoy a better and more satisfactory view than he could in a steamer or a sailing-boat: and if he had time to stop and plunge into the numerous tempting valleys and ravines that open, soliciting as it were to be explored, I do not know how a month or two could be more pleasantly employed than in such an examination of this very fascinating country. Yet, after all, I suspect, if truth were

told, the banks of the Rhine most frequently disappoint the travelled stranger, from the very fact of his hopes having been raised too high by previous rumour. Many points of view reminded me strongly of corresponding scenes in our own Scotland; but there indeed we cannot boast of those picturesque towns and villages that here embellish the landscape.

In looking over the name-book kept by our host of St. Goar, the princes not less than myself were amused by his pointing out to me the name of a "Persian prince," as he was termed, who had passed here some years before. The gentleman who on this occasion had assumed the style and title of royalty, had made choice of no less a character than that of the Prince Royal, and acknowledged heir to the throne of that country,—Abbas Meerza himself. Who it could have been, I have no notion, unless it was Seyed, or *Seidee* Khan, as he is called, an Armenian agent of that prince, sufficiently well known in this country, who, on return from one of his missions, had thought fit to hoax the good folks of St. Goar in this egregious style.

On the next day, the 13th, we reached Frankfort about four o'clock, having travelled over much of this beautiful country in a fall of heavy rain. The town was full, we were informed; but we secured excellent accommodations in the Hôtel de Russie for the night, upon condition of quitting them next day, the apartments having been previously secured from that time, as they informed us, for a Prussian prince, I think. On the morrow, however, Timour Meerza, who had been slightly complaining, whether from cold, or indigestion, in consequence of the trash he persisted in devouring, became so far from well, that it was necessary to give him a day's rest, and fortunately we were permitted to remain. We took the opportunity to see something of the town, and to visit two objects which I should recommend to the attention of all travellers: the beautiful statue of Ariadne, by a Prussian artist whose name I forget, and which belongs to a private individual of the city, who most liberally admits every one that applies for permission to see his collection; and the museum of natural history, a most

extensive and well-arranged collection of preserved animals of all species, formed by the genius of an enthusiastic individual, but supported by private subscription. The two elder princes were greatly struck and delighted with this; more so by far than I could have anticipated.

In the evening the prince and the Wali accepted the invitation of Mr. Cartwright, the British minister here, to a party at his house, to meet the Landgravine of Hesse Homberg: it was a very pleasant evening; the Landgravine was most gracious, and the prince most complimentary. The whole *corps diplomatique* was there; and among the rest the Sardinian minister, Monsieur de Rossi, with his beautiful wife, the ci-devant well-known siren Sontag. To this lady the prince paid much attention; for, although hers was not just the complexion which Persians most admire, her spirit and sweetness, and her fine eyes, made a strong impression on his heart. A few of the usual compliments brought on a conversation regarding the various descriptions of female beauty, and particularly in Persia and in

Europe; and the prince remarked how much more lasting was that fleeting flower in England than in his own country. "Our Persian ladies," said he, "are old, almost before those of England have attained the full perfection of their charms: but England is a happy country; what is there there to distress or perplex its females? the ladies are the objects of supreme attention, and are guarded like treasures by the men from every evil. Ah! happiness, after all, is the great preserver of beauty: one sees," added he, turning to Madame de Rossi, "one sees that this lady is happy." I explained the observation and the compliment. "Ah, mon Dieu!" replied Madame de Rossi, turning to a lady who was next her, "if that were but true; but we know that good looks are not always a true index of happiness!" I trust the energy and look of feeling which accompanied this reply did not derive their origin from personal experience at least, and that the fair countess is as truly happy as she is lovely.

The Wali, meanwhile, was at his old occupation of writing, and made some neat enough

allusion to the political position of Frankfort, calling it "the bride of Europe." Poor Timour Meerza, being unable to come in person, sent as his excuse to the lady of the house one of those embossed flowers, which, as you know, he forms so neatly with his nails upon paper. The sight of this trifle, which was much admired, produced an eager demand for more of the same sort, and the elder prince set-to work to manufacture them. He presented one to the Landgravine; and, on her royal highness requesting that he would put his name to it, he immediately complied, signing his name as "Reza Koolee Meerza, the King of England's willing and attached slave." But time ran short, and in fact he was a less skilful artist than his brother; so he took leave with a promise to send better specimens of this new manufacture, as tokens of remembrance, on the morrow, to her royal highness the Landgravine, and to his much admired Madame de Rossi, with a few other persons of the last evening's party; and this promise was duly performed.

By this time the princes and their lady fellow-travellers understood one another so well,

that I made no difficulty, when business called me out of the way, of leaving them to entertain each other; and it was wonderful how well they succeeded. "I had lain down to lounge," says Mrs. F.'s Journal "on one of the tempting sofas (in the saloon of the Hôtel de la Russie at Frankfort), when in came that creature Timour, chanting his wild Persian airs in so extraordinary a way, that a nap was out of the question. If —— and —— had been here, they would have died of laughing at the extraordinary variety of uncouth sounds he uttered. By-and-by the prince returned, delighted with his drive, and, sitting down between A. and me, he began expressing his pleasure with all the English phrases and words he could command; and a wonderful conversation did he contrive to keep up for more than half an hour. He told us he had one little daughter called Hava, which means Eve, and eight sons,—one, his eldest, very pretty, the same whose picture is enamelled on his dagger; 'that, please God! he go Baghdad, see good wife and mother, and two sisters, and five brothers; and Mrs. F. come to Baghdad, see wife and sisters;' with

a great deal more: he certainly improves in his English. Next evening, when the two elder princes and Mr. F. were at the English minister's, Timour, being on the doctor's list, remained with us. He was not very ill, however, and active enough, Heaven knows! for he kept dozing about the room like a top, singing his wild music, sometimes very sweetly, and much like an old Highland *croon*. A. and I had got our table close to the fire, and taken to our work-boxes, when he came, drew in his chair, and held forth for an hour in a most extraordinary fashion. What between signs and words we got on wonderfully; he told us all about their families, repeated what the eldest had said of his, and said that the Wali had only one daughter. We asked how many he had himself; he replied, 'Three daughters, and one leetel boy; one — two daughters dead; mother write England two leetel daughters dead.' We asked 'Daughter pretty?' 'No,' he said; 'daughter no pretty; leetel boy pretty, leetel pretty.' 'Little girl no pretty,' said I, interrogatively; 'but little girl good?' 'No, no,' said Timour, laughing, 'no pretty, no good;'

and in this way we went on in great merriment till our friends returned, and their account of their party added to our amusement. The prince had been very graciously received by her royal highness the Landgravine of Hesse Homberg, who was there; and was highly gratified with his evening. Their replies to the many questions asked of them were, as usual, marked by much courtesy of expression and excellent tact. The Wali, for instance, who had heard that Frankfort was a free town, at peace with all nations, though belonging to none, being asked whether he admired the city, and what he thought of it, replied, 'I admire it so much, that in my journal this day I have called it 'the bride of Europe.'"

On the morrow, the 15th, the doctor having pronounced Timour Meerza sufficiently well to proceed, we left Frankfort, after a glance at its celebrated fair, and very oriental-looking bazaar, about half-past one; and, driving through the rich garden ground, which surrounds this beautiful city for several miles, reached Asshauffensburgh by six in the evening. This town, which belongs to Bavaria,

is chiefly remarkable for a fine palace,—a hunting-seat, I believe,—which stands upon a rising ground, and is seen on the left as you enter from Frankfort. But the light was too far gone to admit of our seeing much of it; and we left the place so early in the morning, that I was unable to catch another glimpse of it. We remarked, however, a great falling off in the comfort of our accommodations, the hotel being far inferior to those we had been accustomed to: but there was none in the scale of expense; we were still charged *en prince*, as we have been all along, Heaven knows!

The scenery, on leaving Asshauffensburgh, is rich and very pleasing. After passing through the more immediate and highly cultivated environs of the town, the road rises among undulating hills of red soil, partly vine-clad, and partly dotted with fruit-trees, but all in a state of cultivation; and from the top of these you have a noble view of the distant low country the whole way to Frankfort. One strong characteristic feature of the scenery here is the frequent and well-loaded fruit-trees that are scattered over the ground, both single

and in groups; and everything wears a decided look of general productiveness and prosperity. Our road led first through sweet varied valleys, with numerous villages ensconced in delightful nooks beneath us, among meadows bordered with fruit-trees and surrounded with cultivation: each would have made a perfect picture of rural comfort.

We next entered a more wooded country, and passed through an extensive forest, covering similar undulating but not inconsiderable heights, until we descended upon the town and convent of Lengfurth; the latter of which, now the palace of the Countess Lievenstein, is beautifully situated on a terrace overhanging the Maine. We had now crossed two ranges of these undulating hills; a third, more bare than either of the former, still lay before us; and, crossing these, we descended once more into the valley of the Maine, upon the noble castle of Mount Ste. Marie, and the fine old town of Wurtzburgh.

We reached it about four o'clock; and, having secured accommodations for the party, proceeded to view the palace of the former

bishops of the place. An accident, however, enabled us, on the succeeding day, to take a more perfect view of this noble pile of building. It appeared, on examining the carriages, that the axletree of the princes' coach had given way at the shoulder, and it was most fortunate that we reached the town unharmed; as even a few minutes' longer driving must have occasioned the carriage to break down. The fact is, that the coach was so heavily loaded with persons and baggage, that no common work could stand the wear and tear of posting, particularly on the causewayed roads we had so lately left. The time requisite for repairing the damage enabled us to see the more of Wurtzburgh. It astonishes me that this palace of Wurtzburgh is so little known as it appears to be, lying as it does in the direct route by Frankfort to Vienna. In no English publication or book of travels have I seen it noticed; yet it appears to me one of the finest buildings I ever saw. It was erected, as we were informed, by Count Schoenbrunn, bishop of Wurtzburgh, about one hundred and twenty years ago, and occupied twenty-five years in

building. It is constructed of a fine reddish stone, in a style of architecture that reminds one of something between the Louvre, so far as I recollect that palace, and the buildings of our own Wren. The ornaments are much in the taste of Louis XIV. It stands, I believe, upon a square base, but with fine recessions and projections on each face; and every door, window, and niche, is symmetrical and highly adorned. To give you an idea of its extent,—we were told that it contains three hundred and sixty apartments, and we were threatened with a walk of I don't know how many leagues in viewing them all.

The style of the grounds attached to this palace corresponds with the architecture; ponds, shaven turf, clipped hedges, pleached alleys, statues, groves, shrubberies, all preserved in very tolerable order, stretch to a considerable extent behind: before it there is a fine large paved court, which embraces the two sides of the building, and which is a thoroughfare for the public.

When we entered the lower story of this superb edifice, we were struck by the grandeur

of the hall and staircase; though, perhaps, it may be objected that, from the comparative lowness of the basement story, the former wants height. Not so the space through which the noble and easy staircase ascends to the first floor. The ceiling and walls of this are all superbly painted with scenery emblematic of the four quarters of the globe, although some injury has been sustained apparently from damp. The balustrades of the staircase, and the landing-places, are adorned with marble statues. As for describing the endless suites of public and private apartments, it would fatigue without enlightening you. To give you some notion of their vastness,—we looked through one vista of six hundred feet long. It is large enough for half a dozen of crowned heads; and for magnificence, as well as magnitude, Windsor itself must give way: such parquetted floors! such crimson, and gold, and velvet, and marble, and sculpture! Of the infinite series of suites which we wandered through, not one was in bad taste: one, for instance, was finished in crimson velvet and gold; another in green satin and gold; another

in blue and silver; another, again, in rich purple velvet and gold; and so on. The centre hall, under a fine painted dome, was one of the most striking objects I ever met with. Its exquisite scagliola and marble pillars, and sculpture, and gilding, left no idea of magnificence unexhausted; it was a room for Aladdin's palace. Next to it was another apartment, fitted up with painted glass, mirrors, and gold, in millions of fantastic devices: it was a perfect fairy chamber; we all agreed we had never seen anything to compare with it.

But the church within the palace is, after all, the jewel of the whole. I can conceive nothing more perfect in its way; nor, so far as my memory serves me, have I ever seen anything in the least to compare to it. It is not large, but the interior is entirely composed of various coloured marbles and scagliola; pillars, arches, niches, all with gilding and sculpture of the most exquisite taste, and in unspeakable profusion. The altars and pulpit are beautiful beyond description; and there is a quantity of gold and silver, and precious stones, and riches, in dim and dazzling profusion, which confounds

the very brain, and suggests ideas perhaps superior to the truth. I do not think any church can tell in point of beauty after this.

Among other things, the vestry was shown us, and the gorgeous robes of the former bishops were taken from their wardrobes and displayed: gorgeous indeed they were, and rich in stuff and fabric; but the only observation which Timour Meerza made upon seeing them, was, in his queer English, "Very *pooty indeed;* but, if they were mine," added he, in Persian, "I would put them all upon my horses."

Among other apartments in this palace, there was a sort of riding-room, with a round-about for taking exercise on during bad weather. A post was fastened in the centre, from which branched beams like radii, and at the end of each of these was a wooden block, in form like the head and body of a horse, saddled and bridled, which, when impelled by the strength of men, revolved rapidly round this centre; and I think there was some contrivance for its imitating the up-and-down movement of a gallop. On a circle beyond that which

these described, were fixed other blocks, representing the bodies and heads of men; and we were told that the sport as well as the exercise intended, was for the riders on the horses to endeavour with the truncheon of a lance, or a blunt sword, to hack and hew and mutilate these blocks, during their rapid revolutions, as they would do those of an enemy in actual combat. This was just the thing for Timour Meerza: before the explanation was half complete, he was in the saddle upon one of the wooden horses; the guides, amused, humoured his fancy; one gave him a sword, another turned round the machine, while Timour, flourishing his sword, made noses and heads fly like turnip-tops from the trunks and faces of the wooden men. As the motion increased in rapidity, Timour grew more animated and struck more fiercely; he seemed quite to forget that it was but a sham fight after all, and looked as he would have done when riding through the fierce *mêlée* of a real action;—he made truly a fierce figure. It reminded me of the story of the young aspirant for knighthood, related in some of the old romances, who,

eager to gain his spurs before some approaching engagement, but having no enemy actually within reach, drove his horse against a grove of trees, and laid about him with such might and main as to leave no doubt of his prowess on the minds of the spectators.

The only thing wanting to complete the perfection of this fine palace, so far as I could discover, was pictures, of which certainly I saw but few, and those I think not remarkable ;— perhaps those that belonged to it have been taken to enrich the splendid collection at Munich. The king himself resides here very little; seldom spending more than a day or two, as I was informed, in passing through this part of his dominions. This, and the fact of the place being so little known, are, after all, perhaps, the most surprising facts connected with it.

There is nothing more fatiguing than looking over fine houses, and galleries, and curiosities; and the princes, exhausted, and quite satisfied with what they had seen, would not accompany the rest of the party to the two principal churches of the place, which are fine

and worth seeing, though not in the exquisite style of that in the palace. Afterwards we drove round the Boulevards, which are laid out in gardens by order of government, in a manner that shows the attention of the sovereign to the comforts of his people.

I have not said half what is due to the fine old town of Wurtzburgh, with its statued bridge, and its noble castellated fortress; but I assure you that any traveller who may be able to command the time, will find it a place well worth devoting a couple of days to the examination of.

On the evening of our arrival,—I cannot tell why,—there seemed to be something of a gloom hanging over the party, and I frequently observed that on such occasions the prince himself made an exertion to cheer up our spirits: in this he generally succeeded; but on the present occasion Timour Meerza's mind seemed to be the freest from care, and he took upon himself the *frais* of the conversation, chatting away at a great rate. Among other things, he reverted to the interior of the Shah's menage and the gossip of the *Tumbel Khaneh*. The Malekeh, or mistress, of this apartment,

Sumbool Khanum, has charge also of all that relates to the preparation of food for the royal table. She is bound by duty to watch the cooks; sees the meat made ready; and, being satisfied that all is right, she seals the dishes herself in three places. This is always strictly observed, in order to guard against the perpetration of evil designs. Yet, in spite of this precaution, it appears that accidents will happen, and mischief be occasionally successful.

On one occasion, when the king was at Kanzeroon, his majesty's breakfast was dressed out of doors, under the care of his Nazir, Ismael Khan, a son of the Ameen-u-dowlut, minister for the interior. It happened, very unusually however, that his majesty was not hungry that day, and contented himself with picking some bread and cheese, seasoned with a little mint: the rest of the breakfast, that is to say, all the pillaws and stews, &c. he made over to those of his household who were in attendance, and who soon devoured it all.

In half an hour afterwards every one of them was deadly sick, affected in the most grievous manner, as if by a violent cholera morbus. When this was told to the Shah, he sent for

Ismael Khan; and though he himself had eaten of the unwholesome food, and was quite as much a sufferer as the rest, he ordered him to receive two thousand blows on his feet, by way of counter-irritation, I suppose, which he accordingly suffered: so delightful a thing is it to be steward to the Shah of Persia! How the mischief could have taken place, or who was its author, was never discovered; for the victuals had been dressed by the royal cooks in the king's own silver *kablumah*, or travelling kitchen apparatus, and no strangers were known to have approached during the process: but his majesty's own happy fortune in a failing appetite on that particular day, got the credit of his lucky escape.

His majesty, it must be understood, was a huge feeder. As I have said already, he generally begins to eat for half an hour before his guests—when he has any—are permitted to commence; and continues, for half an hour after they are gone, to pick and gorge himself with tit-bits. This intemperance did great injury to his constitution, and was the subject of many disputes between himself and his physi-

cians, who frequently find themselves called upon to lay his majesty under restrictions which he does not easily brook. I am afraid to say how much he used to eat of a certain sort of soup of which he was very fond, or the quantity of water-melon juice with which he washed it down. On one occasion he had made himself ill with eating quantities of *más*, or sour boiled milk, the use of which was accordingly interdicted. But he found means to elude the prohibition without its being known to the physicians, of whom he stood in some awe; and these means were at times ludicrous enough.

You know that the Persians always dye their beards of a fine black,—this process takes place in the bath; and after the hair has caught the colour, it is usual to wash it with mâs, in order to take off the roughness. So, one day after the application of the colour, his majesty seized hold of the vessel of mâs which the barber had brought for washing the royal beard, and tasted it as usual, by dipping into it his finger. But it appeared not to give satisfaction, for he turned-to and abused the

poor barber violently, as a rascal and a *ghorumsaug*, for bringing mâs of *goat's* milk to wash the king's beard. In vain did the unfortunate shaver declare that the mâs was of the same quality that he had used to wash his majesty's beard with for thirty years past; the king called him a villain and a liar, rejected his excuse, and ordered him a handsome allowance of the bastinado.

The next time the barber presented himself in the royal presence on this duty, he took especial care to have an immense dish of the finest possible mâs with the cream standing on it half an inch thick. His majesty's eyes glistened,—the dish was brought within reach, —the royal finger was immersed, and this time words of approbation instead of abuse issued from the royal lips.—"Hah! *Barikillah!*" said his majesty, "your face is white today: this mâs *is* fit for the king's beard, but it is too fat, man;" and the finger dipped faster and faster into the tempting stuff. The barber ventured to remonstrate, humbly representing that his majesty was under a prohibition with regard to mâs, and would do himself

an injury. "Hah! *ghorumsaug!*" said his majesty, "it is not the mâs, but the cream that I am eating, and you know that is *not* good for the king's beard;" so on he went till not only the cream but half the mâs disappeared, and next day the barber had a khelut and the Shah the fever: so the physicians were forced to command that none of the tempting article should be brought into his majesty's presence, whether to wash his beard or fill his stomach.

In such chat the evening wore away, not unpleasantly; but their royal highnesses had also their own little private pastimes. On the way hither, they had been attracted by a parcel of barberry bushes, covered with rich and tempting festoons of berries. They stopped the coach and out they all got, and the bushes within reach were stript of their crop in a twinkling. These barberries they here squeezed, and made the juice into sherbet; and never was good housewife more earnest about the manufacture of her jams and jellies in the fruit season, than they about that of their sherbet: with their own august hands, assisted only by their servant, did they concoct it,

and store it in bottles for future use. It appeared too, that, not being satisfied with the fare of the first evening here, they were determined to try what they could do to mend it on the second. So the Persian servant was sent into the kitchen to boil rice for a pillaw; and the two younger, not satisfied with his exertions, would go and assist him, to the great amusement of the people of the inn, who no doubt had never before seen persons of royal rank so occupied.

All this, you will say, was neither very dignified nor much in accordance with the tone of the remonstrances which had occasionally been made to me on the score of respect and ceremonious attention; but Persia is not the country of consistency, and all this was truly Persian. Let an absurdity be ever so great, it signifies not, so long as it is their own; but let another propose what may appear to them in the slightest degree derogatory to dignity, and they are up in arms in a moment: yet in this respect they are not singular, I fancy; it is not Persian princes alone who will work only "when their ain de'il bids them."

In the course of our second day's stay here, the prince, who as I have said was rather low on the preceding evening, spoke much to me regarding his own present situation and prospects for the future. The three brothers had been talking of their past life and fallen fortunes, and dwelling with more emphasis than philosophy on all they had possessed and lost. The pleasures of the chase, as usual, were engaging Timour's thoughts, while his elder brother was rather considering the uncertain future. "Ah! what noble hawks I had in those days, Saheb Fraser!" Timour said to me; "what capital dogs, both greyhounds and pointers!—and such servants—such followers! by your head, every one a Roostam! And then, what matchless horses! Shubdeez, [the favourite and unequalled steed of Khosrov Purveez] was not swifter or stronger! The truth is, that my establishment was perfect; but where are they now?" "Ay, where are they indeed?" responded his elder brother with a sigh. "*Soocht!* burnt, gone! Do you know, Saheb Fraser, that I have been thinking of what I shall do when I arrive at Baghdad; which

may it please the Almighty to grant!" interjected he, casting up his eyes: "I think I shall cut off my locks (*zulfah*), and put on the dress of the country, with an *ammaum* (or Moolah's turban), and turn *goshehnisheen*," (that is, a sitter in a corner, a person retired from the world.) "I have several good reasons in my head for this, but I want to hear your opinion on the subject. In the first place, when you are going to take up your abode with any people, is it not well to adopt their costume, so that you may not be stared at? — you would not choose to be always an object to be pointed at by them? Then, secondly, when Mahomed Shah (God preserve his life!) shall hear that I have assumed the *ammaum* and cut my locks, will he not be more satisfied than ever of my pacific intentions? certainly *I* think he will, but what do *you* say?"

I replied that I did not doubt he would be satisfied, but that I hoped for better things than his becoming a *goshehnisheen;* I hoped to hear yet of his serving his king, and benefitting his country, by his ability and experience, and becoming one of the pillars of the state.

'Ah, no," replied he, "that there is no chance of: Mahomed Shah may pardon us, he may even be disposed to give us service; but that he will ever grant to us that *Izzut*,—that consideration and honour, which we should require and would be our due,—is not to be imagined; it is impossible." I expressed to him my hopes that the Shah would grant all that could reasonably be required by them, and that a better time might with confidence be anticipated. "No," repeated he, emphatically,—"no, Saheb Fraser; I have turned the subject over and over again in my mind, and I am convinced that it is impossible Mahomed Shah should ever repose in us his sincere confidence, or give us an employment suited to our rank and station. Indeed, I cannot believe that he will even restore our property: in fact, how can he? As for our movables, I never hoped for that: where are they? gone—burnt!" "Yes," said I, "of movables there is little hope; such property, even if it should have reached certain quarters, could not be identified or proved to have been yours. There were the Eelkhanee, —there were the soldiers,—the mob; any one

might have taken it in the confusion, at Sheerauz. There would be no want of excuses to avoid restitution." "Ay, but the Firmaun Firmaee's horses and mules, and his twelve thousand brood-mares, all marked with his cypher," said the Wali, "these would be known, and might be identified; such things do not get stolen by the mob. We have a Persian proverb which says, that the king's goods are never lost." "Ay, Wali," replied I, "and for that very reason they would never be considered as belonging to you; they would be held as belonging to the government of Fars, and not to the Firmaun Firmaee, and so be transferred by the Shah to the succeeding governor." "Well, then, the jewels which the Moatimud took by force from the prince's sister,—two hundred thousand tomauns!" said the Wali. "Ah, let that pass," said the prince, with a bitter smile; "how are these to be recovered,—will the Moatimud make restitution? —But there is at all events," continued he, "our land,—villages purchased with our own money; were he even to restore us that;—but it is not likely, I do not expect it;—*ai*,

*wahi! ai wahi!*" ' But I am not so desponding, prince," replied I; "I have better hopes for you, though it may take time to realize them. I would not be in any hurry about cutting off your locks," added I, smiling. "Ah, if the king gives us honourable employment," said the Wali, returning my smile, "the locks will soon grow again. Well, well, *Dadaish!*" continued he, with a sigh, "these things will pass like the rest: we have friends in England, at all events; I do not think they will let us just die of hunger." Such conversations and painful allusions occurred far oftener than I have thought it necessary to mention, and showed the source of that melancholy and anxious gloom which often saddened the poor prince's brow. His losses and misfortunes were yet too green to be touched upon without suffering, and there was even a morbid tone of mind which prevented the healing process from advancing. Poor men! the "fatal remembrance was still there;" and even the "beams of the warm sun" of kindness might play round it for awhile in vain. I hope, and so will all their friends, I am sure, that a more healthy tone of

feeling may yet supervene; and that a restoration to their families, and the amnesty which may be confidently expected from their cousin-king through British intercession, may prove to them that life is not altogether a blank for them, and that, though they cannot be little kings again, they may yet resume an honourable and useful station in the land of their birth.

## LETTER III.

Sept. 17.—Although the new axle was ready yesterday at two o'clock, yet finding, from all the information I could gather, that accommodation for our party was not likely to be found short of Nuremberg, we resolved rather to pass the night where we were, and take the whole of the morrow with us to reach that town. Our information respecting the places on the way proved false; for the very next post, Kitzingen, affords several good hotels: yet I was not sorry that we had acted as we did, for otherwise we should have been thrown out of the line of regular day's journeys, and put to much inconvenience.

The country being hilly, the princes walked a great deal, which I encouraged from considerations of health. Timour ran bound-

ing over hill and dale like a young deer, followed, "*haud passibus æquis*," by the Wali, whose awkward gambols and curvetings resembled more the absurdities of a frisky cow. In one of these *escapades*, we saw Timour dash on before, and, turning into a field near the road, squat down upon the damp turf. "What on earth can he be doing there?" said one of the ladies. He was saying his prayers.

They were smitten with great joy this day at the sight of a large quantity of mushrooms, and instantly stopped the coach to gather them. When they came to the hotel, they begged me to desire that they should be dressed in *their fashion*, with onions and I don't know all what. I told them that though the cooks in Nuremberg could no doubt dress mushrooms, they being a common article of diet, yet it was ten to one if they could do it Persian fashion; so that, if they insisted on that condition, they had best send their Persian servant to superintend the process. They took this advice, and Timour added his assistance. I heard that they made a fine mess of it; but it did not appear at supper, so that I

presume it was kept to add to the next day's provision, and to the delicate odours of their carriage.

The interior economy of this "good leetel house," as Timour Meerza was wont to call the carriage, did not indeed improve according to our notions of neatness and comfort. There was no end to the trash of which it was made the receptacle; green apples, sour plums, berries of the mountain ash, barberries, onions, all sorts of things, are there stowed away; and they seem all the happier for the presence of this hodge-podge. "Ah lady, if you see we in carriage, how we eat, how we tear fowls, how we enjoy our breakfast!" said the prince this day to Mrs. F., with his face all the time beaming with delight. Not so our servant, who has the cleaning of the "leetel house:" "Ah madame!" said he with a shrug of infinite disgust, "if you saw the *intérieur* of their carriage! *elle est tout-à-fait abîmée.*" And the disorder which this terrible *mélange* creates in the "intérieur" of their unhappy stomachs is a matter of equal or greater uneasiness to me. It has begun to tell much

upon the appearance of Timour Meerza, whose colour and emaciation clearly denote his biliousness. I told him to-day he was as yellow as a kite's foot; "Tchah!" said he, "it is my natural colour." "That I deny," replied I; "you were a very different-looking creature in London, or you would never have been so much noticed by the ladies." "Aha!" said he, turning to Mrs. F. with a loud laugh, "me very pretty, eh! lady? you say Timour very pretty?" "No," said Mrs. F. "Timour very pretty in London,—Timour no pretty here; eat too much lemon, apple, trash." "Tcha! Tcha! *limoon* make Timour no pretty? no, no;" and he ended by a hearty laugh. Certainly, however, it does not depress his spirits: yesterday they were all careering about in the bright sunshine,—the face of the prince beaming with delight, the Wali grunting out his joy, and Timour carolling away like a bird, as he sprang over every obstacle, and flew up to the top of every height. "Timour Meerza," said Mrs. F. "is the Bulbul of Irân;" on which he instantly began imitating the song of the nightingale with most perfect and delightful exact-

ness. "I never," said Mrs. F. "heard it sweeter during all the time I have lived in England."

We had some trouble in getting housed at Nuremberg, all the best apartments of the best hotel being already in possession of a Russian prince. We even contrived to lose the second-best rooms, through our own fastidiousness and the superior alertness of a party which arrived at the moment while we were hesitating about their suitableness, and who settled the question for us by taking immediate possession themselves: it is dangerous, on such occasions, to be too nice; we made out a good supper, however, and good beds for the princes.

Sept. 19.—I regretted seeing so little of Nuremberg, which is a fine old city, worth a day's stay; and large, as I believe, for it is said to contain forty thousand inhabitants: but our object was to get on while we could, and so we made an early start. But we were delayed everywhere by want of horses,—the Russian prince was again our evil genius; every one knows what it is to travel in the wake of a great man, not being of his party: so we

were forced to halt in the evening in rather miserable quarters at Schoënbach, resolved to start in good time next morning, in order to make up for our bad progress of this day.

Sept. 20.—After all, we did not get our horses till five; and there had been some discomforts and misunderstandings, that brought us all in ill-humour to Ratisbon. Here, though a considerable town, we could get no horses for two hours; and we were not much comforted by the bad attendance and miserable breakfast which was set before us while they were coming. We looked at the cathedral, however; and Timour Meerza ventured here to take a stroll through the town, which presents little, so far as we saw, worthy of notice. But the drive down the banks of the Danube, for a few miles before you reach Ratisbon, is certainly pretty.

At the poor little village of Pfaffer, where we changed horses, we were again detained for near three hours; so that when we reached the next stage, Straubing,—a nice little town, and promising comfortable accommodation,—finding ourselves thus everywhere anticipated in

cattle by our Russian friend, I thought it better to stop, and let our precursors get on well a-head, than to go forward and reach the next post, Plattling, a small place, late; and at the risk of not finding the means of being put up. We were not deceived in Straubing, for we got good beds, an excellent supper, and, what was far more rare, at moderate charges.

This day, while we were detained at Pfaffer, the Wali, *à propos* of some fearful sea pieces that hung on the wall of our room, took occasion to hold forth upon his horror for the sea and ships, and to declare that he, for his part, would never put foot upon salt water again. I was aware of what he was about. You must know that, in the route which had been fixed upon as the most convenient in order to reach Constantinople, the newly opened navigation of the Danube had been duly taken into consideration as a means of progress, and, indeed, the only practicable one from Bucharest to the Turkish capital. A sailing vessel was out of question, from its uncertainty, danger, and their abhorrence of the sea; while a journey

by land was not to be thought of, unless in case of absolute extremity, from the utter want of accommodations, and of horses on the way, for such a party; although the only mode of travelling in that country is on horseback. But the short passage of forty to sixty hours from the station of Galatz, upon the Danube, was not considered as imposing upon them any grave inconvenience, notwithstanding their dislike of the sea; nor, when the arrangement was at first proposed, had any objection been made to it by them. The Wali, indeed, always spoke of any exposure to the dangers of salt water and of ships with a shudder; but it was not until after his sufferings on the passage from Dover to Calais, that he had ventured to assume a tone of direct opposition: since then he had on more than one occasion talked *at* me, as if to prepare me for resistance to the plan of again embarking in a vessel in any part of the journey; and I was aware that such was his intention now: it was done, too, in so pointed a manner that I could not, with propriety, pass it unnoticed. I began, therefore, by observing to the Wali how strange it was

to hear a man of sense like him make such a fuss about a trifle, and so constantly and perseveringly declare his resolution against a measure which he knew must be taken; to act thus was the part of a child, not of a sensible man. The Wali, a little taken by surprise at this direct attack in reply to his side-wind approaches, hesitated for a moment; and then, firing up a little, with one of his usual grunts demanded, "How?—when?—why must it be? what had they now to do with the sea? They had crossed it from England to France, and no more sea intervened between Calais and Stamboul. He could look at a map as well as Saheb Fraser." I told him that such might be the case,— I did not dispute his geographical knowledge in this respect; but that he was not, and could not, be aware of all the circumstances that rendered the arrangement already agreed upon advisable, and even imperatively necessary. That he might be sure that his kind friends in England, when they had consulted the wishes of the princes so much as to acquiesce in their preference of a land journey to one by sea, had considered

as much as possible the comfort and convenience of the party in the route proposed for them to adopt, and had made the best possible arrangements to facilitate their progress. That arrangement I held myself bound to abide by, unless future circumstances should render it clearly inexpedient in any of its parts; and, therefore, abide by it I would. The Wali grumbled sorely at this communication; and the elder prince, taking up the subject, remonstrated with his brother, declaring that he felt not only bound, but disposed, to follow my advice in all things. But the Wali, though subdued in tone, continued displeased and discontented, and still growled out in an under key his resolution to proceed by land, and to have nothing to do with the *Kara Dengiz*, as the Black Sea is called by them.

I dropped the subject, resolved to let what had been said work, and trust to circumstances for reconciling discordant opinions: but the elder prince, remarking that I had spoken earnestly, and appeared vexed by the Wali's obstinacy, requested him to annoy me so no more; for that, when Saheb Fraser was *beedimaugh*

(out of spirits), he was so too. He then, as if by way of pastime, declared that he would show us all the way to make apple sherbet, or *àb-e-seeb;* and taking the fruit, of which there was a plateful on the table, began to peel and prepare them.

While he was doing this, he commenced a string of stories, all by way of diverting our minds from the sore subject. He told us of a sad accident that had befallen himself, and a narrow escape with his life, when showing off one day outside the walls of Sheerauz, in the presence of his father and an English "Elehee." "I was figuring away," said he, "shaking my jereed, and threatening now this one and now that, when my horse, a noble Arabian but rather headstrong, ran fairly away with me: there was no stopping him, and he was hurrying right on at full speed for the deep ditch of the town wall, where I must have been dashed to pieces, or have trusted to the desperate expedient of throwing myself off; when, all at once, my path was crossed by Khanler Khan on horseback, who did not hear my shouting though I shouted with all my might, and

therefore did not get out of my way. My horse took that of the Khan right in flank; both horses were killed on the spot,—shattered almost to pieces: the Khan, sent like a shot out of a gun, fell with his head against some people who were near, who were more hurt than he; but I was flung many yards a-head, and, falling on my side, had my hip dislocated, several ribs broken, and otherwise was so much bruised and maimed that I did not rise from my bed for five whole months."

Timour Meerza also did his part to restore the good-humour of the company. There were some flowers on the table with the fruit, and these led to some remarks about Persian gardening; among other things, he mentioned it as a custom in Persia to graft a rose upon the top of a *seffidar* or white poplar. The rose ascends with the rapid growth of the parent plant, and gives down long clusters of flowers from its artificial height. I do not know whether this is a fact, as I never saw it myself; but the prince declared it to be a common operation. He also mentioned another curious fact regarding the seffidar: "It bears,"

said he, "a fruit which is full of mosquitoes, so that, when it is ripe and people break it, a thousand mosquitoes rush forth and fly about; if broken green, you find the worms that afterwards become mosquitoes. This," said he, "is so well known a truth, that no one likes to have seffidars near his house, from their being so productive of mosquitoes." The fact is, that this supposed fruit is but a disease of the tree, as the gall-nut is of the oak; and in it, probably, are deposited mosquito eggs, which are hatched and come to life in process of time: these trees love the water, and are generally planted in moist ground, so that their sympathy with mosquitoes appears not unnatural.

Having had the precaution to send on to secure horses at Plattling the night before, we rose early; and, after bowling famously along the level road to that place, found all ready to carry us on to Vlisshofen, a pretty little town. Here, however, we were detained for an hour, so that it was noon before we took our way up the beautiful valley of Ortenburg, on our way to Furstenzell. This was a

most delicious drive,—everything was green, and rich, and peaceful; happiness and tranquillity breathing from every nook, and corner, and pretty farm. The people were, like the soil, well-clad and comfortable; exhibiting a marked difference from those of Upper Bavaria, where in many places the lower orders seemed ragged and poor enough. I had intended to go from Vlisshofen by the other road to the beautiful town of Passau, but by a mistake the horses had been ordered upon this line; in fact, I do not know that in point of beauty of country we should have gained at all by going the other.

The following extract will show you how it struck my fellow-travellers. "We came down upon the Danube again, about four miles from Vlisshofen, when the scenery again became interesting. The rocky heights above the river were richly wooded. On a fine promontory opposite, were seen the ruins of a very extensive castle, now quite deserted; a wooden bridge across the Danube looked so tempting that I wished we had had time to scamper over it, and climb the rising ground on which these

ruins stood: but we whirled on to Vlisshofen, where we took coffee, and had to wait half an hour for horses.

"From thence, our drive for the next fifteen miles was one of the most enchanting beauty,—to my taste, at least. It was through a valley whose high banks were covered with varied wood, while a clear stream ran through meadows of the richest verdure, all dotted with trees and cottages. These cottages were quite in the Swiss style, built all of wood, the roofing kept in its place by large stones. Balconies with carved wood railings ran along the second story, where flowers, bee-hives, and bird-cages, all told of life and happiness. Every house was a perfect picture of comfort and beauty, and in the interior not less so than without. We went into one of these cottages, and found three young girls sitting at a table, one knitting, and the two younger working their samplers as nicely as our own dear little ——; and all were so tidy, and clean, and happy-looking, that it did one's heart good to see them; while, in the meadow just by, were others turning the second crop of

clover, and children rolling about among the sheep and cattle. We could not bear to keep in the carriage, and were thankful for any hill that gave us an apology to get out: as for Timour, he was soon scampering over the meadows, shouting for joy, jumping over the ricks of clover, and dipping his hand into every sparkling rill that ran by. 'Now this is just the scene and style of country to delight the Persians,' said Mr. F.: 'in a place such as this would they pitch their tents, with their families and flocks and herds, and enjoy themselves till they had eaten up all the forage around them, and then they would move to another such spot; and so live all the summer.' For the present, however, our princes were forced to content themselves with eating up all the mushrooms in their way, and gathering great branches of barberries to make their sherbet.

"It would seem as if the flourishing peasantry were the lords of this happy valley and its riches; for, during our whole drive of fifteen miles through this lovely park-like scenery, we did not see one gentleman's house. The cot-

tages, of larger or smaller dimensions, seemed to denote the dwelling of the farmer or the mere peasant: but all resembled each other in their appearance of comfort and plenty, there was not one we might not have been content to live in; and the spires of many churches sparkled on the heights. They may speak of the despotic governments of Bavaria and Austria; but I am sure, if we were to judge by what we saw to-day, and the condition of the peasantry, I should say it must be a most parental government in the hands of a kind father. The very looks of the people partook of the beauty around them; the girls were quite handsome, and the women as different a race from the squalid ill-favoured creatures we had seen at Ratisbon and in Upper Bavaria as can be imagined.—But I must leave the sweet valley of Ortenburg," &c.

From Furstenzell we crossed a range of prettily varied hills, and descended into the fine valley of the Een, upon the frontier town of Shaerding, in excellent time to get the business of the Austrian custom-house over. The day had lost its beauties and become

gloomy, and the Een and its banks did not look so lovely under the leaden canopy as I have seen them do; but still it was a beautiful scene: we crossed the wooden bridge, however, and soon the black eagle of Austria, at the further end, overshadowed us with its outspread wings.

I have never found much trouble at the custom-house here; and at this time all the officials, as we came along, appeared to vie with each other in civility towards the princes; so we were not long detained. While waiting there, however, there arrived two carriages, which, with their inmates, the princes instantly recognised as English, and I had the pleasure of discovering some old acquaintances. We soon pushed on along the pretty stage to Siegharding, where there being no horses, we came to a halt for the night.

Sept. 22.—We were up betimes, and pushed on to Baierbach. The poor princes had been sadly put to it, for these last two stages, in the way of food to masticate on the road: yesterday the fowls were so tough that even their young teeth could make nothing of them; so

they asked for something else,—eggs, cheese, butter, whatever could be got for their breakfast. This morning, on asking the servant if all was right in this particular, he begged me, just for curiosity, to look into their coach and see what had been laid in. I did so; and — merciful powers!—such a pile of viands! such a heterogeneous mess of food! one wondered what they could make of it, and yet they called for more bread at the very next stage! I think I have told you that they had declined taking breakfast on setting out, and preferred taking a store of provisions with them, to eat when they should feel disposed: to the last part of the arrangement they very zealously adhered; but they had by this time found that a drink of hot milk and sugar was no bad thing in the morning, and so this was now provided for them: the quantity of sugar they consumed actually made these Germans stare!

In the coach they all sat Persian fashion, with their legs tucked under them, or lolling and accommodating one another by turns; the bottom was thus free, and there they deposited the viands,—raw onions, apples, lemons, and

other adjuncts to their food. Timour Meerza had also purchased a pointer-dog, which he carried either tied on the fore-boot, or oftener in the carriage with themselves: the dog did not always agree with an inside berth; so, what with its indisposition, and what with the offal of their own meals, the coach was generally in a pretty mess when they came to the end of each day's journey: I did not wonder at the occasional grumblings of the servant.

Our ride this day was splendid: the situations of Baierbach and Effharding are exquisite; and the road from the last to Lintz, along the banks of the Danube, a succession of enchanting scenery. The castle of Count Schomberg (or Stronberg) rising boldly above the noble river and protecting its own little town, and the fine Capuchin convent near it on the right bank, were most interesting objects. Lintz itself is extremely pretty, and I am sure that a residence of some weeks at this very part of the river would afford to a lover of the picturesque a rich harvest.

Why has the Danube never been illustrated, like the Rhine, and the Seine, and others of

the celebrated streams of Europe? I am much mistaken if it would not beat them all. Set the genius of Turner to work upon it, and I am confident he will produce a work more exquisite, as far as subject goes, than any he has yet put forth. Its course is a very long one; and it winds its way through, or is connected with, far more noble mountain chains than any of its sister streams, if we exclude the Alps. Then, what towns, and castles, and monasteries, and convents on its banks! and what historic and classic associations are linked with "the dark rolling Danube," and Buda, and Belgrade, and Widdin, and Ismael, and Austrians and Turks, and Pandours, and Croats, with all the wild imagery of its semi-barbarous regions and people—not to go still further back into the dim ages of antiquity! But it is a mine which will not lie long unexplored: steam and rail-roads are already at work; and the day is not far distant when an excursion to Vienna and Constantinople by the Danube will be as easy and as common as a trip to the Rhine is now;—but then there is that vile plague and viler quarantine! I cross-

and one rail-road near Nuremberg, and another, I think, at Lintz, both already in operation for local purposes.

After passing Lintz, the country becomes comparatively tame and flat; but two or three small ranges of heights, which we passed between that place and Sternbergh, produced some exquisite scenery: the practice of shaving all the foggage near the road with a scythe for fodder, gives a neat and *soigné* look to all the little fields and orchards, that makes them appear like pleasure-grounds. All the ground among the woods and in the orchards is covered with delicious verdure, improved in fineness by this process; so that there is no rankness: and every corner,—meadows, banks of streams, and all, being under the same management,—wears a uniform look of care which is highly prepossessing. But the abominable, bad engineering of the road, which pops down into every hollow, just, as one would think, that it may have to rise from them again up the face of a steep hill, is very provoking to the traveller; and the more so because both Austrian and Bavarian postilions make it a point of conscience never

to let a horse move at any pace beyond the slowest walk up the slightest ascent: a practice which, when the said traveller happens to be desirous to get on, is a serious source of annoyance.

On the 23rd, at six o'clock, we were in the carriages, and drove to Moelk, a small town, where there is a convent of Benedictines that for size and magnificence is nowhere perhaps to be exceeded. The ride itself was charming, and the noble snowy peaks of the Styrian mountains formed a splendid back-ground to a rich and various landscape.

As to this same convent of Moelk,—how am I to describe its grandeur and beauty both within and without, its long arcaded cloisters, its noble church, its elegant and well-furnished library, its noble terrace, looking up the vale of the Danube, and overhanging its winding stream, its grand imposing front, and its long flank, with rows of countless windows, relieved by light and elegant architecture, and all seated on its imposing rock, rising proudly above the noble river! Who can sufficiently praise this splendid monument of monastic taste and

pride? But how are the mighty fallen! What a change has come over this great establishment! Instead of the hundreds—I had well nigh said thousands—of monks which it must have been calculated to contain, it cannot now boast, I believe, of more than twenty or thirty residents; yet the place is kept in perfect repair, and has lost nothing of its imposing appearance. The sight of Wurtzburg and Moelk alone, to one who prizes such things, would of themselves repay a journey to Vienna.

The day being far spent when we reached Perchling, we preferred remaining there for the night, to pushing onwards and arriving at Vienna in the dark, and too late, perhaps, to procure good accommodations. The master of the inn at that place, indeed, took care to inform us that he was not unaccustomed to entertain princes; for that many of the royal family preferred remaining quietly in his capital apartments, to encountering the noise and hubbub of the capital at a late hour. It appeared, therefore, that we had good precedent for the course we adopted; and, in point

of fact, we found our accommodations very comfortable.

There had been, both last night and this, a mighty work among the princes in brewing barberry sherbet; the berries for which, as usual, they gathered by the road-side themselves. I could not help laughing when I saw them thus employed, but the Wali rebuked me for it. "You don't know the value of this beverage as a medicine," said he: "you asked me why I would take no supper last night: it was because I took *two* of these (quart) *bottles full* of this same sherbet; and it has done me the greatest good,—I am quite comfortable to-day. This night Timour Meerza is going to take the same quantity. Ah! it is far better than the medicine of your Feringee doctors." While Timour Meerza was thus employed, he happened to espy a pumpkin in the kitchen: he eagerly asked if any such things were to be had, and, three huge ones being brought, he flew upon them tooth and nail; sat down upon the floor with one between his knees, whipped out his knife, and began to cut and carve it, scattering the seeds in all direc-

tions; intending, as I understood, to prepare it for being fried or dressed in some fashion of their own for supper: no doubt, the others went to augment the savoury store that was accumulated in the coach.

On the 24th, at eleven o'clock, we entered Vienna. The approach from the side of Benkersdorf has little to boast of, for you do not see the town until just entering the suburbs; but from these suburbs the approach to the gate by which the city is entered is good and handsome, and the style of neatness in which the ramparts are kept is calculated to make a favourable impression on strangers. We drove first to the Archduke Charles Hotel, but found no admittance there; every room was full. At the Hôtel de Londres we were more fortunate, and engaged excellent apartments on fair and reasonable terms.

## LETTER IV.

Behold us then at Vienna, which might be considered as the first grand stage on our long journey; and certainly the easiest one: and, after reporting the princes' arrival at the British embassy, my first care was to make myself acquainted with the facilities or obstacles to our further progress, in order to take the earliest measures for shaping our course hereafter as should appear expedient.

In the first place, I informed myself about the movements of the steamer. The passage from Presburgh, the whole way to the "Iron Gate," below Orsova, I learned was precarious, from the state of the river and shifting banks, which caused the steamer frequently to ground, and rendered the period of her arrival at Galatz uncertain. This would not answer our purpose; which was to reach that point at

furthest by the 17th of October, which was the day on which the Black Sea steamer was to sail from thence to Constantinople: after mature deliberation, therefore, I resolved on proceeding at once by land to Bucharest by the shortest route. It also appeared that the plague had broken out at Constantinople, and had spread to Adrianople, and along the lines of road to Rustchook and Silistria, so that, however great the difficulty of a land trip through Turkey might have been before, it would now be tenfold increased by the desertion of the villages; besides which was to be considered the imminent danger of catching the infection. My resolution therefore was strengthened, if possible, to refuse consent on any condition to attempting the journey from Bucharest to Constantinople by land.

It was not long before my constancy had to undergo a trial, for I found that Vienna was the point at which the battle was to be fought. The day after our arrival, the Wali and Timour Meerza told me in rather a formal manner that they wished to speak with me; and taking me into their room, and fastening the door,

they began: the preparation portended something serious, and accordingly it was so to be. "Saheb Fraser," began the Wali, "you are a *Murd-e-Hissâbi* — a man of correctness and judgment, and we have a great opinion of your abilities and sense; we also have some observations to make, which have been well weighed, and are discreet. You know how we all hate the sea, that it kills us: by your own soul, it kills us! we entertain this hope from you that you will give up the point of going to Constantinople by sea. We hope that you will contrive some means by which that evil may be avoided."—"*Ai*, Saheb Fraser," said Timour, putting on a most sweet face of entreaty with his head on one side, and chiming in,—"*Ai*, Saheb Fraser, now do consent to this. *Wullah Billah!* by your own life, by the death of my brother! we should die if we were to see that *Kara Dengiz;* let us go by land." I told them that it was great pain to me to give them the slightest uneasiness; that they might be sure not only that I desired to do all things in my power for their comfort, but felt also extremely distressed by such altercations as

the present, and would fain avoid them by acquiescence; but that to escape the small portion of sea which intervened between the mouth of the Danube and the Bosphorus was impossible; that for a thousand reasons I must follow the route prescribed to me, and not deviate from it; they knew not, in fact, what they asked.

"But why, Saheb Fraser? We are sure that the English government would not wish to force us to travel by a route that is so very disagreeable to us, and why should you?"

I told them they were right in their appreciation of the feelings of the English government towards them; since, in consequence of the representations of their friends,—my own amongst the number,—that government had abandoned the far more convenient voyage by sea, and, in consideration to their wishes, adopted the more troublesome and expensive route by land. That this very acquiescence should be a sufficient pledge of their good-will; but that, in laying down a land route, they expected it should be adhered to; and that assuredly it was a very bad return for the kindness they had received, to treat its agent with suspicion,

and endeavour to thwart and hinder him in the performance of his duty. I then went deliberately over the several obvious motives that existed for avoiding the land journey through Turkey by any of the routes leading from the Danube:—the plague; the depopulation of villages, and consequent annihilation of the means of progress, at all times exceedingly limited, and difficult of attainment; the exposure to weather in the precarious state of their health, and long desuetude to hardship and fatigue, and the total want of medical attendance during a space of probably a month, which might be calculated on as the smallest period of time which would be required for such a party to perform such a journey. All this I once more put forth at large; adding, that they might place trust in what I said, as, having travelled a little in Turkey myself, I knew something about the matter, which they did not, and could not do. They listened to all this, but without being convinced, or induced to abandon their opposition; and the conference, which lasted near

an hour, broke up without any satisfactory result.

A little afterwards, while I was sitting with the elder prince, the Wali and Timour Meerza came in, and commenced a conversation on the same subject apart, but intended for our hearing. The former declared that he had again been consulting the map, and had spoken to a person who knew the country, and who declared that there was, in fact, an excellent short and easy road from some point near the mouth of the Danube (Dunaw) to Constantinople. The latter replied, if such was the case, it should be by that road he would go, and by no other. The prince was soon involved in the discourse, and the subject once more became general. The Wali and his younger ally repeated all their expressions of disgust at the sea-trip, for arguments they were not; and declared that, whatever the privations by the land route might be, they were ready to suffer them all rather than to encounter the Black Sea, if it were but for three hours instead of thirty or forty. That the *Kara Den-*

*giz* was known to be the proper dwelling of the *Malek-ul-Mout*, the angel of death; that it was proverbial for shipwrecks,—its very name was ominous; and that voluntarily to encounter it, was a wicked tempting of danger. I repeated all the statements I had already made; and seeing that the recusants laid more stress on the discretionary power I was supposed to possess, of changing their route, than was convenient under all circumstances, I thought it expedient on my part to lay still more stress upon the instructions I had received, and repeated that it was a poor return for all the trouble and exertions I had made use of in their service, and for their comfort, to attempt to embarrass and dishonour me by inducing me to swerve from these orders. The prince, on this occasion, took my side of the question, going over all my arguments in better language than I could use; while I, having said my say, sat by, not endeavouring to conceal my displeasure. But all was to no purpose, the Wali and Timour Meerza continued obstinate; and the matter terminated in a positive declaration on their part that ge

they would by land, whether I liked it or not; they thanked God they were not bound by what I might say or do. I might assist them if I thought fit; if so, it would be well; if not, they would do without it, and go on foot if necessary, and beg their way; but by sea, by the *Kara Dengiz*, go they would not. Such was the amount and issue of a couple of hours of as unpleasant discussion and dispute as I ever had in my life; and it not only gave me anxious thoughts for the future, but completely interrupted the harmony of the party, which hitherto had been well maintained.

Before this dispute the carriage had been ordered to take the princes out an airing, to see something of the town, and I purposed accompanying them; but their spirits had been too much exhausted by the battle, and the two younger declined going: the Wali, in fact, was not well. The elder prince alone accepted of the offer; but it was rather in order to have a quiet conversation with me alone, than in the hope of deriving enjoyment from his drive. He showed great anxiety to do away the unfavourable impression made upon

me, as he thought, by the headstrong conduct of his brothers: he observed, that they were young and inconsiderate; that their detestation for the sea was extreme; regretted that there was no way of avoiding the short but most unwelcome voyage; and inquired of me whether, if the facilities had been equal, I thought that the deviation proposed would be disagreeable to the English government. To this I replied that, as to the conduct of his brothers, he might make himself easy. I regarded it as the effect of thoughtlessness and inexperience in persons who had hitherto been little accustomed to the control of circumstances or men; that as to the ideas of government on the subject, I was certain that the true comfort and well-being of their royal highnesses was all which their English friends regarded; but that seeing their inexperience, others, they conceived, must be permitted to judge what was really best to be done; and I mentioned some other motives which, it did not appear necessary to explain to his brothers, for preferring the sea route, and which he agreed were just and cogent.

All this, however, had no influence on the rebels, who, determined to defeat me if possible, resorted to a curious expedient for coercing me into their views: the ambassador of England was absent, and to him therefore they could not apply; but they wrote a letter, which was translated by the interpreter, to Mr. F. the gentleman then in charge of the embassy, in which they complained of my obstinate determination to take them by sea to Constantinople, in spite of their declared aversion to this mode, and although, as they were informed, there was a road, and a good one, by land. They desired, therefore, to know if it really was by the orders of the English government that I persisted in this to them most disagreeable resolution; and, if not, they begged he would take measures for enforcing my acquiescence to the plan of their going by land.

Mr. F. immediately acquainted me with the contents of this epistle, which gave him considerable embarrassment, as of course it was an affair in which he could not interfere; although, no doubt, he would have felt great

pleasure in using all his efforts to mediate and bring the princes to reason. They had requested an interview, which he had agreed to; and I replied that the best mode of acting appeared to me that he should show them the impossibility of interfering, unprovided as he was with instructions, with the service which had specifically been intrusted to another. It was important, I observed, they should feel that the matter rested solely with me, and that I solely was responsible to my own government for my conduct; otherwise the door would be opened to eternal disputes and resistance.

During this interview I dropped in, and found the two recusants pressing Mr. F. hard respecting the roads and state of the country. The elder prince was well pleased at my arrival, and called on me to listen to what should pass: I replied, that to please him I should remain, but that as to listening to what was passing, being fully informed upon the subject, more so than those could be who were discussing it, there was no chance of my views undergoing any change

from what I might hear. Another very violent discussion then ensued, in which the mistake under which the princes lay regarding the facility of travelling in Turkey, was powerfully urged by Mr. F. and the complainants strongly recommended to follow implicitly the course prescribed for them. But all was waste of words: the poor prince declared he had never been so perplexed and distressed by anything as by the unreasonable obstinacy of his two brothers; and I assured him that, had I anticipated such conduct, I never would have consented to accompany them. As for him, that I must say it to his honour, I had on all occasions found him to be a man of sense, reasonable and judicious.

The interview terminated in the most unsatisfactory manner by a strong expression of indignant displeasure on the part of Timour Meerza, and a declaration, both on his part and that of the Wali, that they would not abandon their resolution of proceeding by land.

It now became necessary for me to decide upon some course of conduct suited to the

new state of things, which this contumacy on the part of the two younger princes had produced. Could I but get them to Bucharest, I had little fear that the more perfect information which would there be obtained would convince them of the impossibility of proceeding by the land route, and that the chapter of accidents would all work in my favour; but I found they had been puzzling themselves, and a parcel of Turks whom they had found at a coffee-house here, with cross-questionings about the various routes through Turkey, and that they might take it into their heads not even to consent to go to Bucharest. To leave them to their fate was, of course, out of the question; yet to reduce them even to temporary obedience, was a matter which, seeing their obstinate resolution, it did not seem very easy to achieve. I therefore, after much deliberation, went once more to the elder prince, map in hand; and after again expressing my regret for the headstrong conduct of his brothers, which I was sure would sooner or later bring them into some disagreeable scrape, told him that, whatever folly it was their intention to com-

mit, this was not the place for them to attempt it. By themselves, they could not get on one step; without money or passports, they would soon find it impossible to move. But setting this aside, were it even determined that they should go to Constantinople through Turkey, the nearest point to start from was Bucharest, whither I was taking them; and this I pointed out to him upon the map of Turkey, measuring the distances of the various routes with a pair of compasses. I added, that having given them my full opinion, and stated the causes of it, I should say no more: I had no power over their own persons; if, after arriving at Bucharest, and making such inquiries as there seemed good to them, they should still persist in their insane determination,—*bismillah!* they were then their own masters; I should not make further opposition, but report their conduct to my own government, who would, no doubt, judge of the sincerity of their professions of gratitude and devotion by their conduct upon this occasion.

The prince seemed a good deal struck, and not a little relieved, by this new view of the

case; and communicated it to the two rebels, who were still in the sulks, and nothing further passed: but even up to the hour of our departure from Vienna, I did not feel secure from further impediment on their parts.

These squabbles embittered our stay at Vienna, and rendered what might have been a pleasant and amusing period of repose, a time of anxiety and vexation. The princes consequently saw little of the place, or the objects of interest it possesses: they went twice to the theatre, were much amused by a man who acted to the life the part of an ape, but not much gratified by the fine opera of Norna; and, from their own ill-humour, missed going to the splendid spectacle of the "Spaniards in Peru," which was just the thing to delight them.

On the last day of our stay they were much interested by the visit of a gentleman who had just arrived from Persia, and who was able to give them news of that country in their own language. This was also rather a fortunate incident for me; for his account of the steamer, the smoothness and calmness of the passage

from the Bosphorus to the Danube, and the utter derision with which he treated the idea of proceeding through a plague-smitten country by land, with the other mode of reaching the capital in our option,—all this, proceeding from the mouth of a disinterested witness, had a visible effect upon the two younger princes, who rather hoped to have found in him an advocate for their side of the question than an opponent.

## LETTER V.

On the morning of the 29th of September we started from Vienna, no further objection to our progress for the present being made by the still sulky Wali and Timour Meerza; but the party was increased by the purchase of another dog by the latter, to the no small discomfiture of our already disgusted servant, and, I believe, of his own brothers. But the elder prince, though he maintains his own dignity towards others, is too kind-hearted and too fond of his younger brother to thwart him even in his unreasonable whims: in fact, the young man, with excellent qualities and fine dispositions, has had the misfortune never to have sufficiently known control; a circumstance which, in the present aspect of his fortunes, is likely to occasion to him many bitter

hours in the course of his remaining earthly career.

Having taken the precaution to secure relays of horses by estafette all the way to Pest, we bowled along famously, and with a delightful day, to Hochstrasse, on the banks of the Danube, where we dined, and where the princes had the first specimen of a decided change of fare, and of the comforts of a land journey in Hungary and the semi-savage countries beyond it. The little dirty room contained two beds and three wooden chairs, with a long deal table, which a sheepskin-coated peasant covered with a canvass cloth; a block of wood with two holes in it served as salt and pepper box; and the eggs, which formed the greater part of our repast, were brought to table lying in the holes of the coarse earthen pan in which they had been roasted. What a contrast to the luxuries of the Hôtel de Londres, and the cookery of yesterday! From thence, taking advantage of good roads, good weather, and fresh spirits, we continued our way all night; and, drinking coffee in the morning at Dorecht, alighted in the yard of the "Yager's

Horn" at Pest, about noon of the 30th. The latter part of our journey ran through a pretty enough country, and we should have enjoyed it more had it not been for the dense clouds of dust which literally filled the air. No signs here of the rain which we had encountered in the west; all was dry and burned up: but the dust was almost as deep and disagreeable as the oceans of mud which I remembered well to have encountered during my last journey on this road.

We saw little of either the ancient town of Buda, (called Ofen by the Germans,) or its more gay and opposite neighbour, Pest; for a fine wind, which carried not only the above-mentioned dust, but the gravel, about in clouds, was adverse to exploration: and we left the place next morning at seven, our earlier departure having been prevented by the necessity of putting to rights the loading of the coach, which had been most unnecessarily increased by some purchases of the princes at Vienna. Poor princes! they are miserable novices in travelling! What would they do alone, when, with every exertion of experience

and zeal, it is difficult to maintain them in tolerable comfort, and to exercise over them that indispensable degree of control which is requisite on a long and arduous journey!

The short glance we had of Pest did not impress us favourably. It is just such a place as one would look to find on the boundary between civilization and the desert; sumptuous in appearance, yet rude enough in truth. There was a roughness about everything which smacked of new and imperfect polish. We wanted a blank book for memorandums, it was with difficulty we found anything of the sort; but at last, in a shop which seemed a sort of general warehouse, they showed us one which they said was English, and might there have cost sixpence; here it was two florins, or four shillings: yet the man had all the English annuals for sale, and cheap continental editions of many English works, novels, &c. of which we purchased one or two. We attempted to procure a padlock; but nothing, except of the rudest and most inconvenient description, was to be had.

The fact is, that Pest *is* on the borders of

civilization, if not upon those of the desert. You plunge at once, almost from its streets, into a long succession of uninteresting steppes, sand-hills, and flats; the former being at this time so heavy in consequence of four months' continued drought, that our miserable cats of horses could scarcely drag our heavy vehicles through the loose soil; and, without any visible hollow, the wheels sunk so deep that the carriages more than once were nearly upset. Not a tree enlivens the prospect, and the few villages are miserable. This state of road, together with the extreme reluctance of the princes to travel by night, induced us to halt at the straggling town of Kizkamet, where we could not get even tolerable accommodations, but, after a very rough supper, lay down in our clothes on beds where there was far more of vermin than of rest, and where the noise of drinking boors, and carters and carriers coming and departing, would have banished sleep had we been better off. Yet even in this rude place there was one touch of refinement which contrasted singularly with the

surrounding grossness: in the very next room to the drinking boors we heard a voice singing to the accompaniment of a guitar; it was the lady of this strange hostelrie, whose performance and appearance shewed that she had not always spent her time in these wilds.

Such a state of things was not likely to make us lazy in the morning. We were in the carriage a little after five, and got on well with peasants' horses to Felegehazeh, a town of eighteen thousand inhabitants, where we breakfasted: but the next three stages, comprising thirty miles, were so deep in sand that it was with the utmost difficulty, and great danger of overturning, that we made them out at all. Indeed our miserable horses stuck more than once, so that we were forced to take those of both carriages to drag out one at a time. Thus it was late in the evening when we reached the miserable village of Szatymaz; where, hearing that the remaining stage to Szeguedin was no better, we resolved to halt rather than incur the risk of an accident, although from appearances there was little hope of comfort.

The moon, however, was soon to rise, and we trusted to reach the considerable town of Szeguedin at an early hour of the morning.

Our quarters, indeed, were wretched; as for me, I took up with the carriage in default of any other place. But our intention of departing early was defeated by the severe illness of one of our party, who was not able to move until near noon of the 3rd; when, in hopes of more comfort and better quarters, we resolved to push on to Szeguedin.

The Journal already quoted gives the following observations on this day's journey, which may amuse you, and give you some notion of the pleasures of travelling in Hungary. "Felegehazeh, where we breakfasted, though it looks like nothing more than a straggling village of white-washed cottages, contains, we were assured, eighteen thousand inhabitants: pity that it cannot boast of a better hotel! We breakfasted in a dirty crib of a billiard-room, which, though it was Sunday morning, was full of people; and which gave pretence for all the tag-rag and bob-tail of the place to come and stare at us. Nothing, in-

deed, could be less like a Sabbath morning; for the billiard-balls were rattling within doors, and without were the market-women selling their geese and fowls, and other produce; and carts were continually arriving with cargoes of men, women, children, and other live and dead stock for sale. But it was a picturesque and characteristic scene, and gave us abundant opportunity for remarking the customs and costume of the country. The latter was seen to great advantage, as everybody were in their holiday clothes; and the sheepskin pelisses of the peasantry, adorned with flowers in coloured silk, and leather, and black lambskin fur, the magnificent frogged and braided vestments of the higher orders, and the gray-coloured handkerchiefs and smart embroidered sheepskin jackets of the women, made quite a gallant as well as a novel and striking show. The men themselves were a fine dark Spanish-looking set of fellows, far surpassing the women in point of good looks.

"Our next stage led us through a desert of sand, in a hurricane of wind; and at the post, which was a single house, or rather cottage, in

the waste, there were no horses ready, and we alighted to wait until they were so. Solitary as the place was, we forced our way into one of the cleanest, tidiest little rooms possible, where Timour Meerza, who had entered before us, was making wild music on a queer little harmonica. It appeared, indeed, as if the genius of music had made an abode of this desert cottage; for, besides the harmonica, there were an old harpsichord and guitar, both in very good tune, and several music-books lay about the room. But the genius, him or *her*self, was absent; for, strange to say, we saw not a human creature in the house; and who it might be that played on these instruments, and had spread an air of comfort and neatness over this home in the wilderness, remained and doth remain a mystery.

"After an hour's stay we set off again, without having seen a soul except the sheepskin-coated postilions who drove us here, and with a set of the most miserable cats of horses which had yet been produced; so that we recommenced our journey with no very comfortable feelings, trusting that the sand might

prove less heavy in this than in the last stage: alas! our hopes were vain. Nothing could exceed the depth and heaviness of the sea of sand through which our poor beasts had to wade. But, to compensate for our bad horses, we had a boy for our postilion who spared neither his whip nor lungs in the cause; and I must say that it was due to his exertions that we reached our stage this night. The heavy coach stuck fast every five minutes; and he had as often to leave us, in order to go and assist his weaker brother. Even whip and tongue, however, would sometimes fail; and then, yoking to the coach some of the horses of the chariot, in addition to its own complement, he would mount them himself; and, by a succession of the most unearthly yells that ever issued from the mouth of man, convince the astonished brutes of the necessity of proceeding. When the bad step was passed, back would little Jehu come to enact the same part with the chariot; and so, by crawling and spurring on alternately, we dragged at length our weary way to the post.

"During all this tedious while, our servant

had been keeping up our flagging spirits with an assurance that the post was held by a Hungarian nobleman, at his own private house, where, he dared to say, everything would be found very comfortable; so that we really did expect something above common. Alas for Hungarian nobles, if this be a specimen of their dwellings and mode of life. It was not till after a parley of considerable length that J—— returned to tell us that it was a most queer-looking place, but that his nobility had consented to receive us, and do his best to make us comfortable; so in we all went. The outer salon was a great gaunt place, with a deal floor, inch-thick of mud, on which stood a large coarse table fit for twenty people; and wooden benches close to the wall. There was little else in the way of furniture; but in one corner lay a huge lump of sheepskin, which, we afterwards found out, covered a living man, so sick, however, as not to be able to move; and J—— seemed anxious to get us out of his vicinity: so we passed on to the chamber which we were to occupy. This was a small, close, airless closet, with two beds that were any-

thing but tempting; but better was not to be had: so we had only to put up with it, and to laugh as we might at the humours of this Hungarian palace.

"His lordship, for he was a real nobleman,—one of that numerous class in Hungary whose family property and fortunes have undergone so many subdivisions and changes as to leave scarcely a pittance to the descendants of latter times,—was reduced to eke out the produce of his miserable domain by accepting the situation of postmaster, and accommodating occasional guests. Still he had all his family pride about him, fresh and strong; and all that he did was done by way of favour, and with no small affectation of dignity. His dress, though clean, was so little above that of a peasant, that it was only by the splendid bows he made that we became aware of the honour done to us. No women appeared; our *sacs de nuit* were brought in by shaggy men, among whom was his lordship himself: to one of these I made signs for water and towels, by rubbing my face like a cat washing hers, and then wiping it with my pocket handkerchief.

'It is the nobleman you are making signs to,' said A——, plucking my sleeve; and so it was: there was no offence taken, for his lordship made an obeisance and retired, and, after a few minutes returning, presented the basin and towels with another low bow.

"At supper, which consisted principally of our own materials, he waited on us himself, and broke, for our use, the last piece of white lump sugar in his house with his own noble hands. All this time the speeches made to him by J——, and his replies, communicated both through the interpretation of our servant, were singularly fine and well worth recording, if I had had time and spirits; but what with the heat and dust, and previous fatigue, the hot fœtid air of our room, and the heavy smell of the waterfowl feathers, I became too ill to write: this was increased by his lordship's execrable wine, in spite of all attempts to doctor it up with hot water, sugar, and spice; so that I passed a miserable night."

Fortunately we had been misinformed about the state of the road, there was but little sand; and before two o'clock in the afternoon we found ourselves in really comfortable apart-

ments in the best hotel of that strange straggling town. Thus terminated our passage across this abominable sandy steppe, where the roads, totally unmade, can never be good; because, in wet weather, the stripes of black earth are converted into beds of almost impassable mud, whereas, in dry the sand is just as deep and embarrassing. The villages, with few exceptions are miserable; and the accommodations, of course, wretched: and though there is a good deal of straggling cultivation, the country, on the whole, is in a condition that evinces a labouring population unable, from some cause or other, to keep pace with the advance of the nations around them.

The town of Szeguedin seems to consist of a parcel of great squares, surrounded by straggling houses. The shops are poor, having rude pictures of what they sell painted on the insides of the doors and window-shutters; and the wooden gangways along and across the streets testify how abominable a place it must be in wet weather.

These signs are often of a very curious kind: the grocers' shops, in particular, are announced in the names of the various articles sold being

formed by portions of the article itself glued in that form upon the window-boards; thus, the name of rice was made up of grains of rice; currants, ginger, barley, &c. in the same way: one wonders that they are not picked off by the little mischievous boys about the street.

About eleven o'clock, our invalid being better, we again took the road, and bowling along a fine level piece of black mould, affording now excellent footing, crossed the Theiss at Kiskanitza, and came-to, for the night, at the large village of Kolnos about eight o'clock in the evening. We had now got into the land of maize and tobacco, which cultivation gave a peculiar appearance to the country; the vine, too, is to be seen everywhere.

At Kolnos, the good people of the miserable *auberge* appeared most sensible of the honour of entertaining my princely charge. This was not, however, evinced in the *empressement* of attendance, or the exertions made for our accommodation. It was with difficulty we could obtain the requisite number of beds and quantity of bed-clothes; and the amount of our entertainment consisted of three chickens, a

dozen of eggs, and a little milk, with a couple of quarts of the sour *vin du pays*. It was in the expectations they entertained of remuneration for this sumptuous treatment that they sought to do us honour, and, I am sorry to add, met with no grateful return. The master of the house did not show himself; but his wife, or daughter, when asked for her bill, said that when a royal family lodged with them they expected a present, not payment. On being pressed to name what would meet their wishes, she had the modesty to name two hundred and fifty florins, or about 25*l*. sterling. This reminded me of the story of one of our own kings, who happened to be breakfasting at a country inn, and on finding the eggs charged a guinea a-piece, and asking whether they were so scarce in that part of the country, was answered no, — that eggs were not scarce, but *kings* were. Having tried reasoning, which brought the demand down to ninety florins, I made up my mind about the matter; slipped five ducats into the lady's hand, said it was twice as much as she ought to have, and stepping into the carriage ordered it to drive off,

leaving her to chew the cud on the failure of her attempt at imposition.

We drove off, but it was only to the post-house ; for we had now to experience a taste of the postmaster's talents for fleecing. We had hitherto paid for only four horses for the second carriage ; he now insisted on charging for six; remonstrance was in vain here, we were in his hands, and could not start without his permission ; the consequence was, that we had to pay the same all the way to Temiswar; and though I laid my complaint there before the police, and made all possible remonstrance about it, of course there was no redress. These men seem to be amenable to no jurisdiction ; they charge just what they like, and, when threatened with complaint, set you at defiance, saying, they care not for the police nor for the emperor himself. Every man of them is a noble, God save the mark ! and, from the singularly defective nature of the government, are so independent that they do actually defy it : as our servant said, they think that all beneath the sky, and the sky itself, is theirs, and that nothing is good enough for them ; they ap-

pear to be under no law, and, where there is no law, how can we expect justice?

Temiswar, the capital of the Banat,—a name well known to fame in the history of Hungary, and the wars of her kings with the Ottoman,—is a miserable, half-neglected fortress, surrounded by ditches and swamps, now dry; but which in winter must be full of water, and in autumn full of pestilence. Its solitary streets impressed us with melancholy; even the chief square had little stir in it, although on a market-day, as we found to our cost, for we could not get a decent room to sit in, and the princes were forced, very unwillingly, to sit in the public *salle à manger*, until their breakfast could be prepared. After all, it was prepared almost in vain. The Wali would only discuss about ten pounds' weight of grapes; Timour Meerza, two immense dishes of pears, which he called for, and gobbled up much to the amazement of the waiters.

The hotel was a most miserable place,—a square surrounded by buildings like an Eastern caravansary; all the houses of the place, though bearing an imposing appearance, seem to be

constructed on the same plan, and all seem filled with dirt and unsavoury odours.

From Temiswar, the road, which was causewayed, was good, and we made a push to get on to Lugos, which was said to be a large place; but as we only reached Kisetta, one stage short of it, by seven in the evening, we could not venture on further progress for the night. The auberge at Kisetta being very small, some of the party were obliged to accept of beds in the post master's house; where, but for fleas and mosquitoes, we might have been tolerably well off.

On the 6th we breakfasted at Lugos; which we found, in point of accommodations, worse than the quarters we had left. Borzon, the next stage, was also a miserable place; but the postmaster was civil, and his wife, a pretty and refined-looking young creature who appeared very much out of her sphere here, was particularly kind: but we left the place, and put up for the night at Kossova, a sweet but small village, where we were again obliged to separate into two parties, because the auberge would not hold us all.

We had now left Hungary and the Banat, with their tiresome plains, behind us, and had entered the mountains of Transylvania. The former, at least, I never again desire to behold: ugliness and aridity, or mud, mark the country; stupidity, pride, and rapacity characterise the people. Leaving Kossova about six in the morning, for I found it impossible to get the various members of our company into movement sooner, we drove a hilly stage over beautifully wooded mountains to Kosesd; and another, less hilly, to Dobra, a poor miserable place; neither of them, indeed, calculated to make us regret our having remained at Kossova. The country here, though more populous, reminded me of European Turkey; the villages were seen snugly retired in wooded valleys; the houses, built of clay and thatched, differed much from the whitewashed tenements of Hungary. The people, too, appeared still more remote from the usages and habits of civilized life, and the costume of the women was peculiar.

Our way lay up the valley of the Màros, to Deva, a considerable place with a fine castel-

lated conical rock, where we lunched at a most wretched auberge, and lost two hours. This made us so late, that a fifteen mile stage to Szazuros, a considerable place, brought night-fall on; and learning that the next stage afforded even less means of accommodation than this, we resolved to come to an anchor here.

Some gentlemanly-looking officers directed us to a certain auberge with a sign of "the Two Pistols," in the square, as the best in the place; and certainly, if such was the case, bad was the best. The woman, but lately a widow, had no servants; and the apartments were dirty, and straggling apart from each other. Little was to be had to eat, which was so much the more unfortunate, as the princes happened to be uncommonly sharp-set this night, and had scarcely been shown to their chambers before they began to roar out for a pillaw; this not being likely to make its appearance soon, the Wali, Timour Meerza, and the Persian servant, all rushed into the kitchen like a parcel of hungry dogs, confounded the cooks who had already been put in a

bustle, and turned everything topside-turvy, to the great dismay of the poor hostess, who ran about wringing her hands like a distracted person. They obtained rice, however, and made a mess in time, at the expense of being nearly roasted themselves at the huge kitchen fire. Timour Meerza said the place was like the infernal regions, and assuredly the cooks were as little like angels of light as might be.

Determined, barring accidents, to reach Hermanstadt the next day, I made another strong attempt at an early start; but it was half-past six ere we quitted Szazuros, and the sun had set before we entered it. The first three stages to Rees Markt were easy; the remaining three, to Hermanstadt, very hilly: there was little or no wood; the country bare and brown, but cultivated; the tops of the hills coppice-clad. A branch of the Carpathians made their appearance over the rest, as we approached the termination of our day's work; and a great black gap in one of the ranges indicated the pass of the Rothentourn, by which we had originally meditated a descent into Walachia.

## LETTER VI.

In Hermanstadt I had been induced to expect a large and populous city, and corresponding accommodations; for my servant, himself a Transylvanian, had given me a flaming account of this "*jolie ville*," which, however, he had not seen for twenty years. His youthful ideas, it appeared, as is often the case, had deceived him; for he only remembered the impression it had made on him when a boy, and before he had seen the capitals of Europe. He was as greatly amazed to find how much it had shrunk in dimensions, as I was disappointed at the accommodation it afforded; for, on going to the *Röemische-Kaiser*, the best hotel in the place, we found it but a dirty gloomy caravanserai, ill furnished, and affording scarcely any comfortable apart-

ments. We established ourselves in them, however, such as they were; and I lost no time in making inquiries respecting the remainder of our route to Bucharest.

That there are two principal roads, I knew; one by the pass of the Rothentourn, and the other by Cronstadt: and at first I had proposed to take the former, it having been recommended to me by a friend in London; but at Vienna, the accounts I received of the badness, and even danger, of that route, had induced me to abandon the idea, and resolve to proceed by Cronstadt. Here, however, a new light was thrown upon the subject; for on calling, regarding some money matters, upon a gentleman of the house of Popp, a banker in Vienna and Hermanstadt, and a most civil and obliging person, he strongly dissuaded me from attempting the Cronstadt route, which was not only worse, he assured me, but longer than the other; whereas, if I took the precaution to send to Kinini, the first stage in Walachia, for horses to meet me at the quarantine station, I might depend on having no serious interruption all the way to Bucharest.

He even was kind enough to charge himself with forwarding the intimation to Kinini, and ordering an estafette from thence to Bucharest with a letter to acquaint the English consul, Mr. Colquhoun, of our approach; so that on this subject my mind was set at rest.

This arrangement implied the necessity of remaining the whole of the next day at Hermanstadt; a measure which, I believe, none of the party regretted, and which gave us an opportunity of seeing the town, which in truth is but a poor affair, not equal to a third-rate town in France: it put me a little in mind of St. Omer's. The streets are ill-paved, though broad, with sewers in the middle; and there are several good houses, chiefly in the Austrian fashion, painted, and having double windows. It was Sunday; so that the shops were shut, and there were few persons in the streets. In some parts of the town, which seemed to be those occupied by the higher classes, the streets had the appearance of receiving more attention; and curtained windows, with flowers before them, suggested ideas of tidiness and comfort: but there was no appearance of ad-

vancement or prosperity. The town had originally been fortified, but the walls were now ruinous; and outside of them, in one place, I found a sort of public promenade with fountains, and a monument to some governor or other who had been the author of this improvement.

Some time previous to our arrival at Hermanstadt, the two discontented princes had considerably regained something of their good humour, and the Wali ventured on an occasional sly joke. They saw my anxiety to attend to their comfort, and were, I believe, somewhat ashamed of themselves: but still they had not made up their minds to be good; they felt the coercing power of common sense and circumstances, but had not courage to permit themselves to be led by it. I more than once saw the Wali deep in thought, and then shaking his head say, as if to himself, "*Oh! Karadengiz, Karadengiz!*—Oh! thou Black Sea!" At this place, their courage had so far returned as to speak of it; they had done so first to their elder brother: no doubt, much had passed on the subject in the coach during its weary

progress through the Hungarian sands, and the dreary scenery through which they led us. He begged me to show them the map, and explain to them, as I had to him, the *pro*'s and *con*'s about the road: this I did at once. They saw they had done me injustice in suspecting that I wanted to allure them out of the shortest road upon false pretences; and that Bucharest, or, at least, Georgova, was actually the nearest point to Constantinople; and they were the more inclined to credit what further I had to tell them. I showed them the distance; proved that, at the quickest rate they were likely to ride, it would occupy fully twenty days; told them that the villages were worse than the worst they had yet seen here; and put it to themselves whether they, who thought it much to go seventy miles a day in an easy coach, sleeping and eating tolerably at least every night, could support the fatigue of going even thirty miles a day on villanous little ponies, exposed to the severity of winter weather, uncertain of shelter at night or of food to eat,—even if the fifteen to twenty horses they required could by possibility be got.

The elder prince, after a few moments' thought, said, "*Kheyr Wali, momkin neest; ne-me-shewed.*— No, no, Wali, it is impossible; it won't do." The Wali scratched his head and looked blank; Timour said nothing: so I left it to work, merely saying that they must make their minds up at once, as the time had come when I must write to engage passages for them in the steamer.

The prince himself now began to evince anxiety about the mode and style in which he was to be received and entertained on his arrival in the Turkish capital. I saw that their expectations were too high on that head, and thought it best to prevent worse disappointments by taking them down a peg now: so I said that if they expected to be received or entertained as persons of royal rank, and to be provided with an attendance adequate to such pretensions, I was afraid they would be sadly disappointed; it should be my business to take care for their comfort and respectability as heretofore, but more was out of my power. What attention the Sultan might be disposed to pay, I could not presume to guess; it was a

matter in which I had no power, and could not interfere. He then spoke of the friends he had at Constantinople, who would doubtless flock to see him; and remarked that it would be absolutely necessary he should have handsome apartments to receive them in, and servants to attend; and wished to stipulate that, *when he went to see the Sultan*, he should be furnished with a suitable train. — Poor prince! I waived further discussion of the question for the present, observing that it was premature; that on reaching Bucharest I should write to our ambassador, Lord Ponsonby, to acquaint him with his royal highness's approach and that I was confident his Excellency would order all proper arrangements to be made for their accommodation. This intimation did not appear quite to satisfy his royal highness, who looked rather hurt, as I thought, at the manner in which I treated the subject; but on this occasion the Wali stepped forward as mediator, and made a sensible and rather acute comment on what I said, explaining to his brother its justness: and I left them all three together, to ruminate on the whole conversation.

It was with no small satisfaction on my part, that next morning, (10th October,) we entered our carriages to perform the last two hundred miles of our long journey to Bucharest; assured that every measure had been taken to prevent present delay, and to secure ultimate success. I had written from Vienna to inform Mr. Colquhoun of our coming about this time; and my estafette from Kinini would arrive in time to prepare accommodation for my charges, as well as to smooth any obstacles that might possibly occur on the way: so on we went, with boldness and confidence.

Our first fifteen miles to the pretty village of Boitza lay through a rather level tract; but at this village, near which is the Austrian frontier, the pass of the Rothentourn, or the Red Tower, commences, and a desperate pass it is. The Rothentourn is, in fact, at the village, and forms the quarters of the commandant of the frontier; but the quarantine station is five miles further on. This Red Tower was famous, in times of yore, as one of the passes by which the Turks were wont to invade Hungary; and has been the scene of more than one desperate en-

gagement between the Christian and Mahometan forces: it is a scene worthy of great events.

We were detained shamefully for nearly an hour at this barrier by the indolence of the Austrian colonel or his servants, though all required was to countersign our passports; after which, we entered the pass. The road winds along the bank of the river Altai, which, rising on the north and north-western face of the Carpathians, here forces its way through them. The mountains, finely wooded, close in upon the stream, often leaving little more than space for it to boil along, yet displaying fine patches of pasture stealing up amidst the forest and coppice wood.

The indentations and sharp turns, as we advanced, would often disclose the sweetest and wildest glens, with, perhaps, a lonely hut peeping from among the foliage. There was little, however, of rock; wood predominated, and rose to the highest points we could see, increasing in magnitude and grandeur as we advanced. The left, or eastern bank, was covered with magnificent oak, beech, lime, and hornbeam;

the right, on which side we were, and could therefore see less of, was clothed with more of coppice, but all as rich as imagination could paint in the gorgeous hues of autumn. The highest and craggy peaks of the mountains are not perceptible from the bottom of the mountain; which is rather a pity, as the rock above would relieve the eye, cloyed with the interminable luxuriance of foliage: but still sweet meadows and patches of cultivation produce that effect to a certain extent; and, though we saw no inhabitants, great stacks of hay scattered over the "clearings" on the opposite side gave proof that such existed.

At the mouth of one of these openings, on a little flat spot formed by a bend of the river, stands the quarantine station, a group of houses constructed for the purposes of a lazaretto, and for the necessary officers and attendants; and a more perfect barrier could not well be imagined,—wild and romantic enough to see, but sad enough to be confined in. Here our passports were examined for the last time by the Austrian authorities, and we changed our peasants' horses of Hermanstadt for those

of the Kinini post. It was a striking change to those unaccustomed to such scenes.

Beyond the forbidden pale stood grouped a number of bipeds and quadrupeds whose forms and costumes would have enchanted a Salvator Rosa, or a Cruikshank, in their several *genres*. There was the sheepskin pelisse, the ragged cloak, the scrimp jacket, the mushroom-shaped castor, the round black, the white, or the red cap of wool, and the great Toorkoman-like head-piece; all of which, with wide breeches or long-tailed skirts, sandals or boots, or bits of either, and an hundred other rags and tatters, and nondescript appliances of habiliment, make up the outward man of the Walachian peasant: and, intermingled with these, in quantity exceeding all our pre-conceived notions of what might be necessary, were the scarcely more wild and shaggy little steeds that were to be the immediate agents in our onward movement. But all stood aloof and still, until the word was given, and the carriages moved forward for the last time under the impulse of our Transylvanian posters. When the drivers of these had unharnessed their beasts and retired, leaving the

carriages and ourselves alone in our glory, then it was that life and activity seemed at once transfused into the strange mass, and then began a sight worth seeing.

Not less than twelve of the small shaggy things misnamed horses, with manes, tails, forelocks and fetlocks, matted into solid masses with the burs of the pasture in which they had just been caught, were now brought forward for the coach, and ten for the chariot, all ready harnessed together for the occasion :—and how harnessed ?—a long twisted withy of birch-tree branches, knotted together in the most portentous knots, extended the whole length between the pairs ; and to this the broad hempen collar which each horse wore was attached by ligatures quite as primitive, so that this acted as the main trace ; but each horse was also possessed of a little swingle-tree of its own, with small traces of some sort of rope : but it was only the wheelers that were attached by these traces to the carriage ; the rest depended on the great withy, which was fastened to the end of the pole by a simple knot formed of its own substance, and kept fast by a wooden pin.

This was performed in a trice, and the whole affair was got ready with great celerity and despatch.

But this was not all: a number of horsemen now made their appearance, wild as the wild huntsman himself,—something like Turkish Soorajees,—with coarse grey stuff jackets embroidered with blue worsted lace, and each bearing a brass badge on his breast, and pistols at his waist; their steeds being as small and shaggy as the posters. This cavalry surrounded the coach and carriage, while a couple of men on foot took up their stations at each door, with ropes fastened to the roofs of the carriages, in order, as it appeared, to prevent their turning over in the bad places:—I think we had something like ten or a dozen men about each carriage. These were formidable preparatives, and accordingly we anticipated desperate work.

The road, indeed, was bad enough. It led chiefly along the foot or the face of a steep bank, sometimes on gravel, but oftener on a track cut or worn in the rock, and so uneven that it resembled more the bed of a torrent,

than even the roughest imaginable pavement. There were many sharp pulls too, leading over projecting knobs of rock, and steep descents to correspond; so that the course of the vehicles was anything but smooth. In many places the road was constructed of split logs of wood, supported on beams of the same, driven into the bank of earth or rock, and led across very ugly steps; and these passages always extremely rough from the inequality of surface in the wood, were not a little alarming from their height over the boiling water, which we could see through the chinks of the flooring. Yet, on the whole, the actual danger was smaller by far than I expected, and the scenery was splendid throughout; and the varieties of wood, and rock, and mountain, with the fine green stream boiling and twisting below, amply compensated for the rudeness of the road.

Through this pass, and its wild beauties, we held our way for what is called fifteen miles. I do not believe it is so much, yet the distance from Boitza to Kinini is said to be twenty miles: perhaps the difficulty of the road, and

the time it consequently occupies, are taken into and swell the account. In winter the stage must be both severe and dangerous.

At Kinini, which is a small Walachian town, or rather village, we crossed the river on a floating raft, and were welcomed by a grand-looking person in a fine sky-blue and gold dress. He was a Greek merchant, one of the village authorities, who invited us into his house and treated us with pipes and sweet-meats, offering us dinner if we would stay for it. He had once been postmaster, and "horsed" the road all the way to Bucharest; but the business was now in the charge of another, to whom we accordingly paid the posting fare all the way to that capital. We paid for twenty horses for the two carriages; and the sum per mile, which is regulated, was small indeed in comparison to that which we had lately been charged.

At this place we quitted the river, and commenced ascending the hills which bound its bed. This stage of fifteen miles was a most arduous one for the cattle, and we could only get on at a foot's pace; so that what with

the time lost at Boitza, at the quarantine, and at Kinini, it was dark by the time we had made out two-thirds of it; and a house of tolerable appearance being near, where we were told accommodations were to be had, and the nature of the road being certainly not such as to make night-travelling safe for such carriages as ours, we alighted, and took possession of the only two rooms which the place afforded. Both had cushioned divans running along one of the walls; but, unfortunately for us, they had been pre-occupied by a swarm of fleas, which, so soon as we invaded their quarters, resented the intrusion by a general attack. Sleep was out of the question; nor was its approach much favoured by certain cups of strong tea, which, in lieu of other fare, we had concocted for supper: so that it was no penance for us to be on foot by four in the morning of the 11th, when, shaking our feathers, we prepared for a vigorous start.

It was a good hour, however, before the complicated machinery of our locomotive engines could be rendered fit for action; and then we became aware that, in addition to the afore-

said complement of horses, the *attelage* had been increased by a couple of yokes of oxen to the carriage, and *three* to the coach. These creatures were brought just as from the native cart, with their neck-yoke and pole, and placed before the wheelers, the end of each pole being fastened to the tail of the next by a simple wooden peg: there was nothing about them of the rope sort; and the whole weight and security of the carriages, in the severe up-hill pulls, rested on these single wooden pegs. The oxen are mainly useful in these ascents, as they can be depended on for a steady pull; whereas the horses, if overweighted, get frightened and give way, or pull unequally and by jerks.

Certainly we had need of them all, for dire were the ascents and descents we had to encounter on our way to Primova: but the scenery was grand; the mountains reared their heads fantastically out of a sea of mist that filled the valleys like a lake, and they were all clothed with superb wood. One or two grand rocky masses rose high above the rest, and we had peeps into some exquisitely wild and rich-

ly varied glens that afforded pictures most tempting to the draughtsman: but we had no time for such amusement; our business was to get clear of the hills before dark, that we might pursue our way along the plain uninterruptedly to Bucharest.

On our arrival at Prepora, where we were to change horses, and intended to eat our breakfast, the carriage had no sooner halted than our attention was attracted to a fire in the open air, around which, besides the usual concourse of picturesque savages, and the strings of horses and oxen prepared and ready-harnessed for us, two figures particularly fixed our regards. The one was a splendid figure in an Albanian dress of crimson and gold, with silver-mounted pistols and yatagan; the other stepped forward immediately, and removed any doubts we might have entertained regarding his country, by addressing us in English, and informing us that Mr. Colquhoun the consul had sent him to meet us, to assist us in our progress towards the Walachian capital. He had arrived the night before, and had fortunately been prevented from going further

by the badness of the road; and though he prepared us for a journey, if possible, worse than that of the preceding day, I need not say how pleasant was the rencounter. It was, indeed, a most agreeable addition to our party, and afforded us confidence as well as satisfaction; for we now knew that horses and everything requisite had, by orders of government, been prepared for our approach; and, in fact, at the very next stage, we found a table spread for us in the wilderness, at the house of a Walachian Ispravnick, where we were served with a capital breakfast,—a feast which was done great honour to by our Persians, and which inspired fresh courage in us all.

The road continued much the same for the next two stages, but our *tail* exceedingly increased, for these governors had received orders to accompany us with still larger parties of the mounted police; so that the party resembled a little *corps d'armée* on its route. This was useful in the bad steps, but exceedingly oppressive in other respects: even the dust it kicked up was distressing; and the

shouting and hallooing as they followed the carriages, or supported them in the dangerous places, was equally ludicrous and disagreeable: but there was no evading it; it was the order, and must be obeyed.

We had one unpleasant accident on the way. In descending a steep hill, one of the foot-men, who was propping up the coach, got entangled somehow by the hind-wheel, which threw him down and went over his leg and thigh. He lay writhing on the ground, and, I feared, was desperately hurt; yet on examination it was found that no bones were broken. A medical man, who by a singular chance had joined us,—for medical men are not plenty in these wilds,—examined the limb; he was put into Mr. Lloyd's cart, and left, with some money to provide for his wants, in charge of the postmaster at the next stage.

From thence, we bowled smoothly along a valley for some time; then came another mountain, in the ascent of which recourse was had again to oxen; and then a long descent into the valley of Argish. Here there is a con-

siderable town, and a large handsome finely situated Greek convent, where travellers can always find accommodation; but we thought of nothing but pushing forward to the termination of our journey: so, changing horses, we soon dashed through the rough-streeted village, which is placed very near the opening of the valley into the plains; and, understanding that the road along them was from hence safe and good, went on with confidence, although all was now hid in darkness.

Still it was rough work, for the road in many moist places was made practicable with wooden logs, after the *corduroy* fashion; and, in spite of our eagerness, there was none of the party, I believe, who did not feel it an agreeable surprise when the vehicles stopped, near midnight, at a handsome-looking house, where we were received by a blaze of torches. It was the government house of the town of Pitesté, where an excellent supper, and divans to lie on, if we had chosen to sleep there, awaited us; and where we were welcomed by the governor himself, and his brother: the former a fine-looking old gentleman, clad in the Walachian dress,

and wearing on his head a black velvet cap; the other, equally good-looking, wore the Walachian uniform.

The good supper infused fresh life into us all, and we recommenced our journey with high hopes of reaching Bucharest by four o'clock the next day:—we did even better, for once. There were no delays; the roads improved; and in the morning we found ourselves gliding along a perfectly level ill-cultivated plain, sprinkled with patches of jungle, through which the road, a mere track, winds deviously at will, except where swamps or watercourses render it impassable in winter, and in such places it is repaired with wood: what a business it must be in heavy rain, or after a thaw! The villages resembled those I had seen in Servia,—huts of wattles and clay, for the most part; having, interspersed, a few of better aspect, being whitewashed, but altogether affording no very tempting objects.

Towards Bucharest the country becomes more bare and open; it reminded me somewhat of the approach to Baghdad across its wide and desolate plains: there is scarcely any un-

dulation of ground; but the town, lying altogether on the low ground of a river's bank, presents no object to the approaching traveller except a few church steeples. These, and the tall mast-like levers of the wells, which are very numerous, are the only objects that break the horizon; and these give it much of an Oriental character.

Approaching within a short distance, we were met by a mounted Cossack and some police, who marshalled us by a way which, if it really be the principal approach to the city from this side, has certainly more of the Asiatic than of the European aspect. It led us through broken ground, and hundreds of brick-kilns; and "still the wonder grew:" how are all these swamps and hollows to be traversed in wet weather? At length, crossing a wooden bridge, and escaping many holes and gullies, we reached something like a highway, where, following the gleaming of our Cossack's flag, which, like an *ignis fatuus*, was sometimes seen and sometimes lost, we gained a barrier, where we were received by an officer and guard of mounted Cossacks. The coach being indicated

to this officer as the vehicle containing the persons of their royal highnesses, the Cossacks surrounded it like a cloud, and away they scoured, like hey-go-mad, leaving us to follow as we might. This we did, no doubt; but tired posters, clumsy drivers, and sundry trains of intervening hay-carts, shut us out from view: nor did we regain sight of our friends until, after sundry wanderings in the dusty hot streets, we were found by a Cossack sent to pick us up, and conducted to the house of Mr. Colquhoun, the British consul. As for the princes, there being no hotels at Bucharest, Prince Ghika, ruler of Walachia, on the representation of Mr. Colquhoun, had assigned to their royal highnesses the house of an absent noble for their accommodation, where they were received by a guard of honour appointed to attend them, and welcomed by one of his highness's aides-de-camp. There I left them for the time; and I need scarcely tell you, what pleasure we felt in the consciousness of having thus completed the second grand stage of our journey, which was accomplished at two o'clock on the 12th of October, just thirty-nine days from our quitting London.

## LETTER VII.

THUS happily arrived at Bucharest, the first object, as you may well imagine, was to gain all possible information calculated to guide us in our further progress; and the earliest piece of intelligence we acquired was not of an encouraging nature. The plague, it was said, was prevalent and increasing at Constantinople; the deaths in the Frank and Greek hospitals being stated at one hundred per day. On the morning following our arrival, I found the princes in great consternation at this report, which had already reached them. They had seen the disease depopulate cities and provinces in Persia, where it is a rare, but a terrible visitor; and had no idea of considering it in the cool and tranquil way in which it is regarded by the Turk of Constan-

tinople, of whom it is pretty nearly an annual acquaintance.

After venting many ejaculations of horror, upon my regretting that they were likely to be so unpleasantly welcomed at the Turkish capital, they instantly and most strongly protested that not one step towards Constantinople would they make while plague continued to exist there. "No, no, Saheb Fraser," said the elder prince, "*Een showkee n'eest*—this is no joking matter: our object in this journey is to return in health and happiness to our families; and whether this object is attained four or five months sooner or later is of little consequence, so that it be secured: but to go with our eyes open to a city of the plague, is not the way to do so; on the contrary, it is the sure mode of never seeing our families at all." Their tone altogether appeared to be so completely changed from that impatience which so lately marked it, and they talked so indefinitely as to their probable time of departure, and of their stay at Bucharest, that I felt it necessary to bring them up a little, and told them, that, though undoubtedly I should not consider

it right to press them to run serious risks, I must yet protest against unnecessary or indefinite delay, as contrary to the spirit of my instructions and the intentions of the English government. The prince replied, that the English government, in framing its instructions, did not, he presumed, contemplate such a contingency as this; and then went on to state his own views regarding his stay here, and the arrangements to be made for his reception at Constantinople.

In reply, I said, that as the reports from thence were so unfavourable, but at the same time rather vague and uncertain, if he desired it, I should not press his departure for that place by the steamer of the 17th, but would write to Lord Ponsonby, requesting his excellency's opinion and instructions on the subject; and that his excellency would, no doubt, give directions for making all necessary preparations for his royal highness's reception, both as regarded security of health, and comfort of situation. At the same time, I felt it my duty to stipulate that his royal highness should give his promise to consider himself bound by what-

ever might be the result of this appeal, and to regard the opinion and suggestions of Lord Ponsonby as the expression of the intentions of the English government. This the prince agreed to do; and accordingly the necessary measures were forthwith taken, by the very steamer which should have borne us to Constantinople.

On the whole, I was not ill pleased with the arrangement. To have insisted upon the princes repairing to a scene of disease, even supposing I had possessed the power of enforcing my determination, would have been a strong measure, and, in case of any subsequent misfortune, would have subjected me not only to blame, but to the reproaches of my own conscience; and, I doubted not, the next steamer would bring me tidings that would at all events suffice to guide me as to the future. In the mean time, I saw that the prince's head was rather turned by the brilliancy of his reception: received by a guard of honour, lodged by the prince's command, attended at his quarters, not only by menials, but by officers of the prince's household and regular troops,—

treated, in fact, in all respects like a prince,—it was a foretaste of what he had to look forward to at the capital of the Sultan, that filled his head with magnificent ideas; and it was obvious that he was disposed to presume a little on it, and assert his independence.

The next day, the second after his arrival, it had been arranged that their royal highnesses were to meet his highness Prince Ghika. His highness sent his own state carriage, and there was a great turn-out of troops and guards; the ante-chamber was filled with officers glittering in gorgeous uniforms of blue and orange, adorned with military orders; and they were most graciously received by the prince himself, in state, surrounded by his ministers and staff, who expressed his high gratification at seeing them in his dominions, and trusted they would find their stay agreeable.

In two days after this, Prince Ghika returned the visit of their royal highnesses. He came in state, attended by his guard, his ministers, and officers of state, who "made a gallant show." After compliments, his highness expressed his hope that, these ceremonies over,

he should have the pleasure of seeing their royal highnesses on easier terms, and again expressed his anxiety for their comfort and convenience. Mr. Colquhoun took this opportunity of expressing his thanks to his highness, on the part of the British government, for his attention to its guests; and at the same time observed, that as their royal highnesses had no wish to occasion inconvenience, or assume much state, they were desirous to return to their privacy, and would therefore, if his highness pleased, dispense with the guard of honour he had been good enough to assign them: the prince smiled in acquiescence, and withdrew with his train. A day or two after, finding that the owner of the house which had been assigned to the princes, under the idea that they were to occupy it for two or three days only, was on his return to town, it became necessary to get them another lodging, which was obtained, by the exertions of the consul, near his own dwelling. The guard of honour was withdrawn, and their royal highnesses removed to their new quarters; and from that time forward, during their stay of more than a month in Bu-

charest, not the slightest attention was paid to them, either on the part of the prince or his officers, or the individuals of the place. Instead of the frequent and familiar intercourse which his highness professed his desire to maintain, there never was an invitation given, nor another visit sought or paid. Twice or three times an officer called at the lodgings of the princes, to express his highness's good wishes; but these went, it seems, no further, and the subsequent neglect was rendered more strikingly apparent by the brilliancy of their first reception.

What might be the influence to which this change was owing it is not for me to say, I only know the fact: nor was it that Prince Ghika rarely receives company, or seldom gives invitations; on the contrary, it is well known that his highness is often pressingly polite in his attentions to travellers of distinction, and loves to have them at his table. Be that as it may, the change was not unheeded by, nor unsalutary to, the princes; it brought them to their senses, and rendered the very kind attentions which they unvaryingly met with from

the consul and his family of double value in their eyes; they felt the steady nature of English friendship, and learned to value the counsel they received from their English friends.

Still, however, their spirits were not brought down to the point which yields opinion, and defers to the better judgment of others. Their fear of plague, and resolution not to visit Constantinople while that fell disease remained there, not only continued unshaken, but every opportunity was taken of expressing it: like that so long maintained by the Wali and Timour Meerza against embarking on the Black Sea, it was put forth as a fixed purpose, which no argument could change. And what now had become of that former and once unchangeable resolution? It was gone,—the stronger devil had driven out the weaker; worlds would not now have tempted any one of them to adventure on a land journey in Turkey, where, as the prince observed, "I cannot touch a mat, or a bit of old rag, that may lie on the road by accident, but, *tchick!* I have the plague. *Ai wahi! ai wahi!* what

a fortune is mine! How shall I ever see my family? on one side, my way is bounded by the wide sea; on the other, cut off by plague!"

In this way he used to entertain me whenever I went to sit with him; at last I lost patience a little, and said, that nothing surprised me more than to hear a man who had seen so much of life, and had felt misfortune, and experienced danger in many shapes, so terrified at trifles, which every traveller and merchant encounters without giving them a thought. "Ah!" said he, "Saheb Fraser; but these were dangers one could see, and knew the worst of: now plague, a thing that kills without knowing how or whence it comes, that is a very different affair; and as for travellers and merchants, it is their trade,—their business. Now, you English think nothing of a voyage by sea, for you are *Ahl-e-Deria*, 'children of the sea;' but we Iranees are *Ahl-e-Zemeen*, 'sons of the land:" and, *Penah-bur-Khodah!* the very thought of the sea makes our skins creep: and as for merchants, let them carry on their trade if they will; but for

us, we have no business to throw away our lives by thrusting ourselves into the middle of plague."—"Well! prince," replied I, a little impatiently; "the English government will have difficulty to believe this extreme timidity of princes whom they look upon as soldiers and men of courage." The prince looked at me silently for a moment, and then said in a sarcastic tone, which was very unusual with him, "That may be: but you will allow that it is well for Mahomed Shah that we are such cowards, and *he*, at least, will be well pleased at hearing it; for, of course, we are not likely to put hand to sword or fire-arm against him, nor ever to conspire against him with his enemies." To this I made no reply; but, returning his scornful look, walked off.

In fact, his royal highness appeared at this time to have changed something of his character, and lost a good deal of that sweetness of disposition for which he was usually remarkable. Not only did he show a strong repugnance to continue his journey; but, having admitted the necessity of being prepared for acting upon the receipt of tidings from Constantinople, he

became most fastidious about the nature and extent of these preparations. I saw that his ideas of state and appearance were still too high, and anticipated no small disappointment for him, and vexation to myself, when these things came to be made matters of discussion at the Turkish capital,—if, indeed, we were destined ever to get there.

I need not repeat all that the poor prince, during this short season of irritation and petulance, permitted himself to give vent to; but he persevered in talking so resolutely and so much, as a matter of course, of his stay for some months, perhaps for the winter, at Bucharest, until all symptoms of disease should disappear at Constantinople, that I informed him I should feel it my duty in that case to write home at once, and request the directions of his Majesty's government as to my own proceedings. "And what reason," said he, somewhat fiercely, "will you give for this delay? Perhaps you will tell them that I have entered into some intrigue here against the English interests, and am no longer the friend of England."—"No, prince," said I,

with a smile of pity; "I will tell the truth,—it is our custom so to do. I will say that you appear to me to linger from an excessive fear of plague."—"Well!" said he, "write what you please; I will write too."

Unfortunately, the little information we received from Constantinople about this time was most unfavourable for calming the prince's apprehension; and though I myself should have had no scruple at going there, the responsibility of forcing these poor princes to incur a danger which they so much dreaded was more than I was willing to incur.

Time wore on, however; and, as it always does, worked a silent change. The fiend *Ennui* again began to make his visits to the princes. They never would go out to walk, riding-horses were not to be had on any terms; and, although a carriage was kept for their convenience, they made little use of it. Making up some clothes for the winter occupied them for a few days; and we took one or two excursions to a country-house near town, belonging to one of the prince's family, and to which they took a fancy, because it had a

fountain of good water, and resembled somewhat their own disorderly Persian gardens. But their time hung heavy on their hands, few if any persons whatever went to visit them; and though they were always welcome at Mr. Colquhoun's, where they met with some pleasant persons who spoke a little Turkish, they longed for change: the thought of their families, and their desire to be with them, gained strength in spite of their fears; their lamentations for being cut off by the plague from pursuing their journey, grew more and more bitter, and insensibly the present annoyance of delay began to over-master their fears.

On the 1st of November, by the return of the steam-boat from Constantinople, I received replies to my letters, informing me that, though plague existed there, my charges need have no cause for apprehension. That it had been deemed proper to inform the Sultan of their approach, and that his highness had ordered them a *konak*, or accommodation, in the house of one of his officers, Mahomed Nedeem Bey, which was at Yeni Kewy, not far from Therapia, upon the Bosphorus, and where

there was no plague. We were expected by the return of the steamer; or requested, in failure of coming, to say when we might be looked for.

This information put the princes in a state of considerable excitement; but it was not now so much a question of "Shall we go? are these accounts sufficiently favourable to tranquillise our fears?" as of "Who is Mahomed Nedeem Bey? what is his rank? shall we be near the ambassador? shall we find servants and all prepared?" But, in fact, the question of 'to go,' or not 'to go,' was already decided; for the steamer was to sail early on the morning after I received my letters: so that, having one hundred and odd miles to proceed by land to Galatz, where she lay, to sail with her this trip was impossible. Of this I informed their royal highnesses; and further told them, that, as there was but one more steam trip to be made this season from Galatz to Constantinople, they must make up their minds to start with me for the former place upon the 14th of the current month, come what might. To this a constrained and sulky sort of assent was

given, an assent wrung more from their own uneasy restlessness than from a compliance with my wishes; but the affair was settled.

After this time the weather broke up and became inclement; on the 3d November we had snow, the melting of which in another day or two made country and town an ocean of mire. It was strange to see the acacias still green, yet loaded with snow. It was not spring in the lap of winter; it was winter rudely thrusting his cold "extremity" into the lap of a rich and vigorous autumn, which still retained some tints of summer. A few days before, it had been too hot to wear other than summer raiment; at this time, that of winter was acceptable, and all the stoves were lighted.

This change of weather not only circumscribed the few enjoyments and comforts of the princes, but affected their health. The Wali gave us serious apprehensions from an attack of sore throat, which required the most vigorous treatment. Timour Meerza was complaining, and the interpreter and their Persian servant out of order. The mode in which the

Wali was attacked, and its extreme suddenness, was well calculated to startle his brothers. He had complained of a cold, and slight soreness in his throat; but beyond some trifling application nothing seemed necessary for his cure. At the dead of the night he made his appearance in the room of the elder prince and Timour Meerza, unable to speak, but uttering fearful crowings, and pointing to his throat; up they got, in horror, and when they comprehended what was the matter, they got hot water, judiciously enough, and worked at his throat all night, so that, in the morning, speech at least was restored. But their alarms were not over; a number of leeches were applied to reduce the inflammation, and, after bleeding sufficiently as was thought, the wounds were bandaged up again. But, out of a mistaken care for his comfort, they had made the room so hot that the bleeding recommenced in the night; and the poor Wali was awakened by finding his whole person wet with blood, and his long beard clotted with it. He thought himself a dead man; but, recovering from his first panic, he rose up, and ran to the chamber

of his brothers, not as before mute, but bellowing out and crying, "*Ai Dadaish*, Ai Timour Meerza, help, I am dying, all my blood is spilt!" Up sprung the poor princes again from their sound sleep, and there stood the Wali, pale as a sheet, smeared, nay, steeped with gore; his eyes staring in his head, and his arms outspread, like a reanimated corse. No wonder that it was some time before they could re-collect their scattered senses, and attempt to yield him assistance. This they commenced by administering to him a little rum and water, which quickly reanimated him, while the sick nurse flew over to alarm the consul's household. The barber who had applied the leeches was then sent for, and soon allayed their panic and put all to rights. The extra bleeding probably saved him from any recurrence of the malady, for he had no relapse and recovered from that hour; but never liked to hear told the story of his fright.

But, in fact, not one of them now enjoyed either quiet of mind or perfect health of body, and it was painful on going to their apartments to see the same listlessness to which

they had been a prey in London creeping over them again, accompanied by symptoms of failing health; and under circumstances where neither exertion nor expense could procure for them the amusements and palliatives which London afforded. And now, as in seasons of distress is ever the case, the princes returned to their senses, and clung to those from whom they had always experienced kindness and looked for aid. In these hours of depression it was the visits of Saheb Fraser and the good consul that they watched and longed for, and the delight which filled the eyes of the party showed how these visits were valued: and now came apologies without number for past follies and petulance; and entreaties for forgiveness, and promises to sin no more; and acknowledgments of the great trouble they had given, and the exertions that had been made for their comfort. "We are ashamed when we look you in the face, Saheb Fraser,—your words were always right; and as for me, I will never slight your advice again, nor dispute your words, whatever they may be."

Their perplexity was increased about this

time by a discovery of gross misconduct and dishonesty on the part of their Persian servant, Assad Oolla Khan, whom alone they retained about their persons when the rest were sent away by ship, and who had accompanied them from London. He was an Affshar,—their mother's tribe, — of some rank, and connected with her, and had enjoyed their perfect confidence. In fact, the prince told me that he himself had, at one time, made the man governor of a considerable town and district. It was now evident that he did not merit this confidence. The discovery had, indeed, been made by the elder prince at Damascus, where some valuable articles were abstracted, and traced, to the satisfaction of his royal highness, to this man: but his brothers were either less easy, or less disposed to be convinced; the man, in fact, was useful to them, and was permitted to remain. The loss of several things of value here again aroused their suspicions, which were confirmed by the conduct of their servant, who was seldom in at nights, and often absent during the day. He was questioned; but his replies were so far

from satisfactory, that it was resolved to watch him. The loss of the golden cover of their caleeoon at length roused them to action; and one morning, before dawn, when the man was absent, they commenced a search in earnest. The mode of doing so was characteristic enough. While some of the party searched the house, and the place where the man slept, Timour Meerza, taking an iron spit, proceeded to the garden, and *sounded* the earth, in search of places which might have been recently turned up. In the course of this examination he discovered a soft spot; the spit penetrated easily, —then was resisted; he was sure of his mark; the place was opened, and the hidden treasure found. None but a Persian, accustomed to such tricks of his countrymen, would have fallen on such an expedient.

The amount of the articles found surprised the princes, who had no idea of his extensive scale of operations. There were no less than five pairs of pistols and three Indian shawls, besides a quantity of lesser articles; but those stolen at Bucharest, which had occasioned the search, were not among the number; and how

the others, which they believed to be on their way, by sea, to Beyroot, had come to Bucharest, they were at a loss to imagine. But the man, on being questioned, soon solved the mystery. He never attempted to deny the robbery, but on the contrary, with an imperturbable coolness, which seemed a compound of stupidity and effrontery, told them the whole story.

At Damascus, he said, he had made acquaintance with a fair seductress, to satisfy whose demands he had not only stolen and sold the pearls missed by the prince, but made away with a large portion of certain golden ornaments intrusted to his care. That some part of the money had remained till after his arrival at London, and had been expended in similar *liaisons*. Often, he declared, in London, the other two servants had proposed that they should rob the prince of a box in which was contained his jewelled dagger and all his small remains of property, and that they should spend the proceeds together in jollity and amusement (*khoosh goozeraunee*); but that the thought of leaving his masters thus helpless

added to his fear of detection, had deterred him from consenting, and he prevented them from doing it. He was asked, what could possibly have been his object in committing such a crime;—had he not all he could desire supplied to him? He admitted that such was the case, but that all was too little to satisfy the ambition of himself or his comrades:—London had opened to them new views and new desires; and he had set his heart on having a carriage, and a lady to drive about in it by his side; and it was for this that he wanted to secure a good sum of cash. But though he resisted the joint-stock temptation, he could not withstand that of seeing the purchases made by his masters coming in daily, and being packed up for transmission to Baghdad. The packages had, all but one, been closed; and, one day, he was sent to take something out of the one remaining open. Just beneath the article required, lay the pistols; it was too much for human, or, at least, for Persian nature; he remembered, he said, that his masters owed him a considerable sum for wages which he chose to fear might never be paid him, and so he thought he might

as well secure himself by taking into his own keeping a portion of the objects before him; so he removed the five pairs of pistols and their appurtenances: beneath them lay the shawls; these were very convertible and useful articles, so they accompanied the pistols: and so on, till he feared to abstract more, and all were packed into his own portmanteau. His intention, he said, was to have done nothing till the time of the princes' departure from Bucharest, when he would quietly have absented himself, and, after they should have gone, would have enjoyed himself with the wretched associates he had picked up here. Such was his own story, which I dare say was quite true, as it exhibits much of the improvident folly which mingles with almost every Persian trick.

The question now was, what to do with the delinquent. To leave him at Bucharest would have been in every way improper. Rogue as he was, it would not do to let him starve in a strange and distant land; nor would the tales he would doubtless have invented against them have contributed greatly to exalt their good name, a matter they were very sensitive to;

while, on the other hand, they were too wavering and undecided to bring themselves to the resolution of laying the affair and the culprit before the authorities of the country: so we were obliged to decide for them, and send the man under a guard to Galatz, to be shipped to Constantinople, from whence he could easily make his way to his own country of Azerbijân. He must have been an abundantly silly person, so far as expenditure of money is concerned; for I remember that, on searching his box, one article of his investment turned out to be fifteen harmonicas!

Their disgust at the whole of this business was extreme, and all tended to the same point, —a desire to proceed on their journey and return to their own people.

In fact, I believe that at the last they were far more anxious for the time of departure than myself, and certainly they evinced no want of alacrity in making their final preparations.

On the 15th of November these preparations were complete. The advanced state of the season, the uncertainty of time and means of

return by sea, the hardships of a land journey and of quarantine, induced me to resolve on leaving at Bucharest those of our party least fitted for such toils, under the kind and hospitable care of our excellent friend the consul, while I alone prepared to accompany them to Constantinople.

It was a painful parting on all sides. During their long and unexpected stay of more than a month, the warm and unwearied kindness of Mr. Colquhoun and his amiable family had made a home to the princes, and to all of us, of a place which, without their hospitality, would have been a most dreary prison; for, as I have already observed, not the smallest attention was paid them by any of the natives. To the consul's they were always welcome; and besides dining there very frequently, they constantly came over in the evenings to sit and talk with the ladies, as to their own home: while, on the other hand, the consul and his family were always contriving some pleasure or amusement to gratify them, and make the time pass more lightly. Thus the poor princes felt that in quitting Bucharest, or rather the

English consulate there, they were quitting their last English friends,—their last hold on European society and comforts: while these kind friends, to whom their many good qualities, no less than their misfortunes, had endeared them, in spite of their childishnesses and occasional follies, felt sincerely anxious for their future fate. As for those who had been their fellow-travellers for so long, and had shared the toils and few pleasures of the journey, they were quite overcome: and as I am neither fond of, nor good at, describing parting scenes, I will give you this in the words of the Journal already often quoted.

"This day was all preparation and bustle; the court was filled with carriages and horses like that of an inn: there were thirty of the latter required for the party, including the luggage-cart; for the carriages, if loaded, would never have got through the mud upon the road. The dinner was sad enough; Timour declared that, whenever he looked around the table at us all, a lump rose in his throat, and he could not eat. It did not prevent him from talking, however: for he was the life

of the table. The prince was sweet and grave, full of kindnesses and gracious words. He bade J—— tell me, that if ever he had offended me, or been unreasonable or troublesome, he now desired my forgiveness, and begged me to remember that he had been spoiled from his youth, and was accustomed to other ways than ours. 'Tell her,' said he, 'that I feel ashamed when I think how troublesome I have been: but, lady, I have been used to much attendance; I had twenty women to make my bed: so pray forgive me.' I told him, and truly, that I had never felt aught but pleasure in his company, or received aught but kindness from him. If anything had gone wrong, it had not come near me,—no cloud had ever come between us; and that the remembrance of the time we had passed together would ever be pleasant to me. He said, he wished to send his little son to England to receive an English education; and I promised, if he did, to act a mother's part to him, and teach him to be good. I then gave him the little gifts which I had prepared as keepsakes; sending also some trifles to 'Mrs. Reza Koolee Meerza,'

and to Timour's little girl. The prince begged to know how I had addressed his wife: 'Have you called her sister?' asked he:—and so I was obliged to write a note to the lady, addressing her as my sister, after the Persian fashion, and saying all manner of sweet things. Then came the sad parting. The prince, when he saw me overcome, had tears in his own eyes: he took my hand and pressed it to his heart, saying, 'Don't cry, lady; I will send Saheb Fraser soon back to you, and I will watch over him that no harm come near him; I will be a father and a brother to him, so help me, God!"

There was no use in prolonging a scene which distressed every one; so I hurried them off: and at eight o'clock in the evening we got into our carriages, and quitted Bucharest, accompanied by Mr. Colquhoun, who, not contented with making every possible preparation for our comfort on the way, insisted on seeing us himself safe to Galatz.

## LETTER VIII.

And now, seeing that we have thus left the capital of Walachia, you will probably be inclined to ask me what sort of a place it is. It is a question more easily put than answered, though not from the abundance of interesting objects to describe; it is the want of marking features that causes the difficulty. For the town, figure to yourself a great extent of habitations, small and large, mean and of high pretensions, huts and palaces, spread over a low tract formed by a river's course; the said river a small muddy stream, rolling between its filthy banks through the middle of the city. These multitudinous and ill-assorted habitations are so interspersed with trees and gardens, that in summer you can see but a small portion of the buildings. This, to be

sure, is the best portion, for it is those which are loftiest and whitewashed that are most seen. Whitewash is liberally used in Bucharest, and is as cheerful and ornamental as it is conducive to cleanliness and health; and the view of the town from the Metropol, where there is a walk made by the Russians, or from certain other points of the high bank which partly embraces as well as overlooks it, is really pleasing and prepossessing. But all ideas of pleasure, or cleanliness, or health, cease when you enter its narrow, crooked, filthy streets. These are, one and all, it may be said, little better than receptacles or canals for dirt and abominations. It is only within these three or four years past that any of them have been paved with stone, that article being extremely scarce in the neighbourhood of Bucharest: and even now the great majority continue still *floored*, as one may call it, with split logs or planks of wood; from which they obtained, what they still retain, the name of *Podo*, or bridge. But many of them, and among these the great roads of entrance, are guiltless of either stone or wood; so that in win-

ter, after a thaw or after heavy rains, the mud is so deep, and the holes so numerous and profound, that carts or carriages cannot pass, or, if they attempt it, stick fast in the slough. Nothing, I conceive, in the shape of a city can exhibit a more depressing, hopeless, and miserable scene than Bucharest after a fall of snow, when a thaw has well advanced; it is a city afloat in an ocean of black mud.

As for the buildings, there are many private ones which affect the style of palaces, but it is remarkable that nothing seems ever perfectly finished in Bucharest; the funds, or the fancy, seem always to come to an end before their object has been completed, and nothing is ever kept in perfect repair. The moisture of the climate, and the nature of the materials made use of, invite decay, so that an air of dilapidation and discomfort is spread over what really is a rising place. Every palace, and private house too, in wet weather, is surrounded with its own little peculiar sea of mud; for few, indeed, are the instances where either pavement or gravel have been brought to the aid of cleanliness and comfort in the areas.

Bucharest, I believe, boasts of having as many churches, or nearly so, as there are days in the year. I hope that it may not be a case for the application of the vulgar proverb. Among the whole, there are none of any remarkable magnitude or beauty; and the ornaments, chiefly painted by Jew artists, are coarse and tawdry. There is a college for the education of youth at Bucharest; and, as there is a minister of state expressly for the care of public instruction, it is to be hoped that this is attended to. I have understood that education is, in fact, making great progress.

Perhaps, one of the most singular points in the view of Bucharest, is its perfect insulation in a wide and boundless plain: look which way you will, beyond the bounds of the place, and the small space of flat ground which intervenes between it and the high bank aforementioned, and you will not see an object that rises above the surface, except the poles of the wells, to which I have before made allusion. There are no woods,—no trees even; no country houses, or gardens, with one or two exceptions: all—all is flat, uninteresting plain; so level, you

would think, that a ball set a-rolling would bowl along to the world's end, without meeting the least obstruction:—it is a sadly wearisome sight. The fact is, that Bucharest is not only a town of somewhat recent origin, at least as a capital, but has been the victim of a long series of misfortunes that have frequently almost destroyed it, and render it rather a subject of wonder how much is left, and how rapidly improvement is taking place, than that things are so backward as we see them. Tergovest, a town to the north-west of Bucharest, and in a far finer situation, was, as I have understood, the original capital of Walachia. Why the change took place, or when, I know not: probably, when the Turks sent Greek hospodars from the Fanar, these satraps felt more at home in proportion as their new abode was within easier reach of the Turkish capital; or their Turkish masters may have willed it so. As for its misfortunes, not to speak of the rapacity of these hospodars, and to go no further back than the commencement of the Greek revolution, then an insurrection; from that time Walachia has been the scene of constant struggles. The

Turkish invasion and Turkish vengeance were traced in characters of blood in Bucharest. A person there mentioned, as one incident, his seeing three hundred heads, of not the meanest Walachians, washed at one time at a fountain which was pointed out to me; nor did these atrocities cease until the Russian war in 1828, when Walachia was occupied by Russian troops, which maintained possession, and only evacu ated it some months ago. One of the Walachian Boyards himself told me, that he had seven times renewed the furniture of his house, which had been six times seized or destroyed. But we must do justice to Russia: once in her possession, she addressed herself to the improvement of the principalities; brigandage was put down, travelling rendered safe, and improvements commenced at the capitals; the few which exist at Bucharest have been of Russian origin. Into the motives of this we will not examine; and dearly did the devoted country pay for them.

Walachia, in fact, is a country just rising, and shaking itself, after having been long pommelled and trodden down in the dirt by rival

powers, who, like dogs over a bone, were quarrelling for the envied morsel. We cannot, therefore, judge of what she would have been, or may yet be. Her capabilities are excellent, and her resources great; and with fair play, and rest to permit her energies to develope themselves, she might rise to great prosperity.

Neither is it fair to judge of the character or disposition of her people from present appearances, tyrannized over and maltreated as they have been by foreign invaders: no doubt the *materiel* is excellent — nurture and education must shape it to good. There is already a light breaking in upon the darkness. Old prejudices are wearing out; and many of the nobles, who have had more advantages than their fathers, have had their eyes opened to their true interest and that of the nation: give them, as I have said, but fair play, and there is no doubt of a rapid progress in the right way. Public opinion—that is, the opinion of the nations of Europe to which countries thus emerging from darkness are most sensible,—will guide and keep them right.

As seen in society, so far as my limited means of observation enable me to judge, the Walachian and Moldavian Boyards are pleasant and courteous; of their private characters I can know but little from experience, and therefore have no title to speak. Of the ladies all I can say is, that those few with whom I became acquainted were agreeable, and many of them very pretty.

Perhaps you may wish to hear an account of the impression made by this same Bucharest on less practised optics and fresher feelings than mine, and you shall have it accordingly.

"We are quite well pleased at the rest we enjoy in our comfortable and most pleasant quarters here, and there is quite enough of new and strange in this wild Walachian capital to interest and amuse us. It is impossible to convey an idea of the town; a Turkish town, as it may almost be called, is something so strange in all that meets the eye, a compound of magnificence and barbarism, grandeur and squalidity, so remarkable, that one is astonished at it beyond measure. The town is spread over an im-

mense extent of ground; and its three hundred and fifty churches, with their white and glittering spires, towers, domes, and minarets, would of themselves alone impart a splendour to any town: but, besides these, there are the various palaces of the prince and nobles of Walachia, with the public buildings, each standing in its separate court with its offices all surrounded with acacia-trees, and often with gardens; so that, when seen from a height called the Metropol, the *coup d'œil* is very fine, and suggests the idea of a splendid and beautiful city. But very differently does it strike the traveller when he comes to a closer inspection. In driving to these same palaces, he passes through narrow lanes scarcely deserving the name of streets, and generally paved with logs of wood, which jolt him to a mummy, to a wooden gate of prodigious dimensions, but in a most dilapidated condition. This gives entrance to a court knee-deep in mud, or covered with weeds, straw, and dung, across which he has to make his way to the entrance of the palace. Arrived at this point, his wonder is divided between the gorgeous

dresses of the Albanians in attendance, and the rude wooden uncarpeted staircase and dirty hall, which lead to rooms that for size and barbaric splendour of decoration are seldom seen surpassed. Such is Bucharest; everything partakes more or less of the same mingled and incongruous character. The furs, the silk pelisses, the turbans, and Cashmere shawls, which abound among the lower classes of Walachians, the Greeks, Jews, and Armenians, is astonishing, and one never tires of gazing on the various costumes in the street; while, on the other hand, the tattered habiliments or naked skins of the gipsies and meaner rabble occasion an appearance of wretched and savage squalidity which is more striking from the contrast.

"Among the various novel features of the scene, the appearance of the shops attracted much of our attention as we drove through the streets. The room in which the goods are exhibited, or rather in which the various tradesmen and manufacturers work and sell their wares, is unwalled, and the interior entirely exposed to the view of passengers; and

the motley groups and piles of various goods, mingled with the wild but rich dresses of sellers and buyers, formed a scene of singular interest. Here tailors were busy in preparing the fine befurred and bedizened robes of winter, cutting and shaping them in the public streets, as it seemed. There women were seen nursing little creatures swaddled up in silk, furs, and bright woollen robes of rainbow hues. Old crones were busy with their distaffs, and still more so with their gossip. Jews and Armenians were busily hurrying about upon their gainful businesses, and the lazy, shaggy, sheepskin-coated peasants were lounging more lazily along. Here was a waggon with heavy wine-casks stuck in the mud, or broken down; and there dashed along the numerous dirty, tawdry, ill-kept carriages of the Boyards, offering another miserable contrast to the gold and silver liveries of their gaudy Albanians and footmen."

## LETTER IX.

LET us now proceed with our journey. It was with mickle toil that we made our slow way right on through the unvarying plains, in spite of bad roads, and reached Ibrailoff about midnight of the 16th. On the ensuing morning, after some doubts about a floating bridge over the Sereth, which was reported to have been carried away, but which, through the kind interference of the Governor of Ibrailoff was made passable for us, we started, and reached Galatz by sunset, where the princes went to the house of the English vice-consul, Mr. Cunningham, which had been prepared for their reception; and Mr. Colquhoun and myself took up our quarters in the hospitable dwelling of Colonel Balsch, the governor of the place. The country through which we

drove calls for little notice; rich, flat, and most imperfectly cultivated, it presented no features to please the eye, except the natural capabilities of its soil. To a sportsman, however, it would have been most interesting, for greater abundance of game, particularly bustards, I never saw; the latter were in flocks of many hundreds. We crossed two rivers, the Ialomniska and the Sereth. The latter, swollen by snow, was a fine stream, almost as large as the Euphrates above Hilla when I saw it in January, and not a little resembling it: beyond this river, which divides Walachia from Moldavia, the country rises into waving hills, at the foot of which, upon the banks of the Danube, stands Galatz.

On the succeeding morning, the 18th of November, on looking from the windows of my bed-chamber, my eyes fell upon the grimmest and dreariest prospect, I think, that I ever remember to have seen. It reminded me of nothing so much as the towns of Stabroek and New Amsterdam, in the colonies of Demerara and Berbice, in their early days, and during the rainy season. It had rained heavily during

the night, which added to the ocean of mud in which the whole of Galatz appeared to swim. Before the door ran a street, or rather a canal of mud, beyond which the remains of a garden —that is, a few miserable trees and bushes—displayed some dripping brown leaves, half choked in rank sere grass and yellow weeds. This stood upon a bank overlooking a low tract, which, when the Danube is high, is totally inundated, but now looked like a swamp after a thaw, full of leaden-coloured pools. On part of this stood the huts and houses of the lower town, to reach which in spring a boat is necessary; the smoke from their roofs scarcely rose to unite with the dense bluey-grey mass of mist that lay in a thick cake above them. Beyond these was the Danube, a fine broad stream, with thirty or forty vessels at anchor off the town, the only good feature in the landscape if the sky had been clear; but, seen under an atmosphere of mud and lead, the whole was as depressing as the most atrabilious mind could picture; and, to complete the comfort of the whole, the rain was still pouring. Such was my first view of Galatz; and, however great the

comforts I enjoyed within doors, in the house of the excellent Colonel Balsch and his most kind lady, it never appeared to me much better: it was always an ocean of mud, and dirt, and abomination.

At Galatz, however, we were doomed to remain far longer than we contemplated. The first piece of information we heard was that no steamer had yet arrived; and this was so far fortunate, for, upon going to call on the princes next morning, I found that the elder, who, till now, had most fortunately preserved his health, had, from some cause or another, been seized in the night with cold fits and shivering, and was, when I saw him, in a very threatening state of fever. It appeared, on examination, that some disorder had existed for the last few days; and a doctor being called in, found it necessary to have recourse to strong measures to procure him relief.

In spite of these, however, the disease did not show any symptoms of diminution, and for several days appeared disposed to take the most serious turn, so that I became extremely uneasy. It at length determined into a violent

inflammation of the liver and chest, forming what the doctor termed a "bilious pleurisy," and was accompanied with a teasing cough, great restlessness, and general uneasiness. The prince himself was extremely alarmed, and made a miserably bad patient: it was painful to hear him groaning out appeals to me to help him; to charge the doctor to use his utmost skill; to see if there were no other medical men; not to permit them to leave him; just as a poor sick fretful child when it sees its mother about to quit it for a moment. Assuredly nothing was spared to render the poor invalid's situation comfortable. His brothers and the interpreter Assad were indefatigable in their attendance, as were the servants of the house and Mr. Cunningham himself: but, while pain and illness remain, there can be no rest; nor could the prince exert that patience or self-command which might have been expected, and which more than anything else perhaps tends to mitigate the distress of illness. He was ever taking fancies for particular articles of food or drink, and desiring to have what was forbidden; and

assuredly more than once disordered his stomach seriously, and caused partial relapses, by insisting on eating or drinking such things as his attendants had not courage to refuse him.

In addition to the uneasiness which his illness of itself produced, I had the further anxiety of being uncertain how far the medical assistance which had been called in was equal to the emergency. Galatz does not, indeed, afford any great choice; and, having once put the case into certain hands, there was danger as well as delicacy in attempting to make a change, even could we have been certain of making it for the better. A consultation might be held indeed, but we all know how little, in general, results from that; but, as the prince did certainly appear to be fast losing strength without losing the disease, I had a consultation called, which decided that everything which had been done hitherto was right, and that there was no appearance of immediate danger.

In the mean while time rolled on: the steamer did not come; and, after some time, it was said that the Ferdinand the First, which

was the regular trader between Galatz and the Bosphorus, had been sent to make a trip to Trebizond; so that she was not likely to reach Galatz again for some time, if, indeed, the season should permit her to come at all: but one night's hard frost on the Danube might do the business, by freezing the river up, and shutting her out for the winter. This was no great comfort; and yet, as the poor prince's situation rendered it impossible that he should profit by her arrival, at least for some time, it was not to be desired that she should make her appearance; so that, between the season and the prince's illness, we were in a pretty dilemma. I assure you, that I began once more to contemplate through the vista of possibilities, the chance of a winter in the Principalities, with the further happiness of spending part of it at least at Galatz, where, from the infinitely smaller resources of the place, little of comfort was to be expected; and I regarded our removal from Bucharest as a most unfortunate measure. There, at least, we were within the reach of assistance, and more within the pale of communication with

the civilized world. Here, scarce even the necessaries of life, and none of the elegancies or luxuries, were to be procured.

While the prince's malady was at its height, I was myself taken ill. A fever confined me for three days to the house, and chiefly to bed; but by prompt attention I was enabled to throw it off, and was fortunate enough to have no recurrence. When I was able to go and see the prince, I found him much reduced, fever still present, and a hectic spot upon each cheek, which alarmed me exceedingly, although in other respects he was assuredly better; that is, he had less cough, and was capable of taking a deep inspiration : but the eye was still heavy, and the system still obviously labouring under the influence of disease. It was only now, in this extremity of danger, that the restlessness of my own mind, and the sinking of my own heart, rendered me sensible of how much I truly loved the prince —how much, in spite of all petty causes of vexation, his mild and amiable manners and real goodness of heart had won upon my own affections. It was to me as if the life of a

near and dear relative were at stake; and when, as at one time, I believed that all was, or would soon be over, the loss of a brother would scarcely, I think, have cost me a severer pang.

There was one medical man, an Italian, who, because he had not complied with some forms prescribed by the Moldavian Medical Board, was not entered on the list of practising physicians in that country, but who, in the opinion of some people, was the most skilful man within reach. The medical man in attendance on the prince refused to meet him in consultation; he could not, he said, according to the rules of the service; but he did not object to my sending for him and hearing his opinion. This I did, and the doctor saw the prince. His opinion coincided with my own, that, if more vigorous measures had at first been taken, much danger and distress might have been saved; but he did not appear sufficiently distinct in his opinion of the case, to encourage my interfering with the regular practitioner: and, as if to decide the question, the following night the prince evinced

symptoms of amendment, which satisfied me that, whatever mistakes might have been made, nature was going now to do her part, and that, if merely allowed fair play, the patient's recovery would be sure.

During all this time of anxiety and discomfort, you may believe that the brothers of the invalid did not find themselves in a land of bliss; the confinement, both from snow, rain, and mud, was so irksome that their very existence was like a burthen. When not actually ministering to the sick man, they slept or yawned, and groaned all day; and, when I came to see them, they used to talk of Bucharest, and those we had left there, and of London, "Ai London! Ai Mivart's!" with a shake of the head and a sigh, that proved how sadly sweet their recollections of those places now were, however they had wearied of them while in possession. But they never did relax in their attendance on their brother; their tenderness was perfect and unremitting; and I must say that the patient devotion of Assad, although bound to him by no tie of kindred,

and little more than that of sympathy and companionship, was beyond all praise.

It is impossible, in fact, to imagine anything more dreary than Galatz at this season, or indeed, as I should think, at any season. The streets are literally canals of mud, in which carts are sometimes lost. You cannot go out to your next-door neighbour's without a carriage; those who possess not that luxury use long boots, in which they wade knee-deep through the thick porridge; but there is not one foot of dry ground, or a paved street, in all Galatz. There is one long crooked street, indeed, that leads to the shore, or river bank, which is made a *Podo*, as they call it, or bridge; that is, has been laid with planks, or split logs of wood, which, as you drive over them, play squish-squash in the watery mud on which they float: but when you get down to this shore, your charioteer has full liberty to expatiate in the broad space of muddy clay that intervenes between the houses and the river bank, and where you sometimes have the pleasure of sticking so firmly and so deep,

that your pair of horses cannot extricate your vehicle. As to cleaning a carriage, or harness, or horses, such a piece of labour-in-vain is never dreamt of; the dirt hardens on them, unless when washed off by the rain, and some of the stains of the first days will stick by them till the last. Even such a thing as a clean interior is unknown in the dwellings of Galatz: the lady of the house may, indeed, contrive to keep one or two apartments tolerably decent; but the lower story is one cake of mud and must be so from the constant passage of muddy-footed menials. As for the vice-consul's dwelling, what with the coming and going about the invalid, the business of the vice-consulate, and Prince Timour's dogs, it was in vain to think of cleanliness or comfort; so he gave up the notion, and abandoned the whole house to them with as good a grace as possible, praying only like myself for as speedy a termination as possible to our stay and miseries.

Soon after the prince was taken ill, we had a false alarm about the arrival of the steamer. It was the Pannonia from Orsova, which, having

come down the Danube upon the Turkish side, and touched at several places on her way, had been placed in quarantine. In her were several English gentlemen. Among the rest Colonel Blane and Captain Duplat, of the Royal Engineers, on their way from England to Constantinople, who had taken their passage on board the Pannonia, expecting to find the Ferdinando Primo at Galatz, and to be transhipped at once, so as to continue their journey without interruption. You may judge of their disappointment and disgust at not only finding no Ferdinando Primo here, but that they must consent to go into quarantine for fourteen days, or until she should arrive. They had come straight from Vienna, and though the vessel had had communication with one or two Turkish towns where not a suspicion of plague existed, it was not a little hard for them to find themselves forced into limbo at Galatz.

As soon as I heard of their arrival, I made haste to see them; and, in reply to their growlings, I told them that, if they knew as much of Galatz as I did, they would hug themselves

upon having the privilege of living in the lazaretto, where they would have better air and less mud, rather than be obliged to take up with such quarters as they would find in the town, where there was no auberge, nothing decent procurable to eat or drink, and not even the means of going about, from being surrounded by oceans of mud. That, as for myself, I was fortunately most comfortable, by the kindness of Colonel Balsch and his lady, who had actually made me *enfant de famille;* but that, without such a fortunate chance, I should not have known where to lay my head, the English vice-consul's house being totally occupied by the princes under my charge. I fear, however, that they scarcely felt the full force and value of my consolation.

After many hopes and fears, and occasionally great anxiety, the prince at length showed evident symptoms of amendment; and on the 30th of November, just thirteen days from that on which he was taken ill, he was removed for the first time to the sofa. The chance of his not being well enough to embark in the steamer, should she arrive, had always

been a source of uneasiness to me; and it was now just a race between *his* progress towards strength, and *hers* towards Galatz. Last night and this morning there had prevailed a strong report, which we could not trace to its source, that she was not to come at all; and I had actually been talking to a merchant of the place, conversant with the roads through Turkey, about the practicability of getting from hence to Varna, when doubts, if not fears, were terminated by the fact of the Ferdinando Primo's arrival this night at her station off the lazaretto. My kind hostess herself was the first messenger of this piece of good news, which she prefaced by the most good-natured and flattering expressions of their sorrow at being about to lose me, and all possible good wishes for my welfare. God bless her! she was a kind-hearted soul; and I have to thank both herself and her excellent husband for many a pleasant hour, that otherwise would have hung heavy on my hands.

It now became a question of great anxiety to know how far the prince might be equal to the removal on board, and the exertion of a

sea voyage and possible sea-sickness; for the captain, whom I went to see early the next morning, told me that he could not possibly stay later than till the morning of the 3rd December, or rather the preceding midnight, so that all passengers would require to be on board by Friday night the 2nd. But the information of the steamer's arrival operated like magic on the invalid; so anxious was he to quit the scene of his suffering, that the prospect of doing so gave a moral stimulus worth all the cordials of a doctor's shop; and as to his brothers, instead of now showing any reluctance to embark, I believe, so thoroughly were they wearied with their confinement at Galatz, and so much did they hate the very sight of the place, that they would have carried the prince on board by force, had he hung back. It is true, the Wali more than once asked me anxiously how many hours we should take going down the river, how many on the *Kara Dengiz*, and, above all, how long they should continue out of sight of land?—"Could you not," said he, "get the captain to keep *near the shore* all the way? for when I see the

land, Saheb Fraser, I feel as if the danger were less. Oh, let us keep near the shore. Wullah! let it be so! And if the wind should rise, Saheb Fraser, and the great waves come round the ship, or if there should be danger, don't tell me anything about it; tell me only the good news, none of the bad; in the name of God, let me not be frightened by evil tidings! If I am to be drowned, let me go down always believing that things are going well!" Is it possible, you will say, that these imbecilities can have come from the men who faced the foe and the torrent, cut their way through bands of armed men and swam through foaming floods, and endured a thousand hardships in their flight from the land of their birth? Yet so it is; such is the inconsistency of *Persian* human nature at least!

When all are of one mind, matters go smoothly on. By Friday noon we were all ready; and the prince, in his travelling dress, waited impatiently for the hour of removal. Col. Balsch offered kindly to lend his carriage; and it was arranged that after dinner, just before dark, we should embark at the town

quarantine, just where the vessel lay. Accordingly, having seen all the princes' baggage off with the interpreter, I returned, and took my last dinner with my most kind entertainers. A little before four o'clock I bade adieu to my excellent hostess, whom I shall ever remember with sincere and grateful attachment; for hers was the hospitable kindness of genuine and disinterested good feeling, — never obtrusive, but always attentive and eager to oblige. Colonel Balsch accompanied me to the consul's, —the princes had gone before; so we went to the quarantine, and found they were safe on board. A few minutes terminated my business on shore. I shook the good colonel by the hand, and embraced him *à-la-mode du pays*, —adieu! — then hastened on board, where I found all the party assembled at the dinner-table, the younger princes doing right good justice to the viands, and the invalid sitting in high spirits at the fire. "Oho! Saheb Fraser," said he; "so, you have caught me!" "Aha!" said Timour, with his queer quizzical look, "and us too! — ah, Saheb Fraser thinks, now he has got us after all, he can do what

he pleases with us; he is strong and mighty, Saheb Fraser." — "Ah," replied the prince, "Saheb Fraser knew what he was speaking of; we did not: there is the difference."—"Ay, prince," said I, "I hope you are now convinced that I had no wish but for your good, and that of your brothers, when I resisted their wishes at Vienna. I ask you now, and I ask them, what other way there was of extricating ourselves from our difficulties, except by this steamer, which it was the goodness of God to send? Had it not come, or had you refused to go in her, what had been the alternative?—a winter at Galatz: would that have delighted you?" — "*Astafferullah!*—may God forbid!" said the prince; "you are right, all you have said is true." The Wali laughed and winked at me with his little twinkling eyes in a knowing way, and all was right. Fervently did I thank God that night for the blessed opening which he had vouchsafed to make for us through the difficulties and embarrassments that had surrounded us so long: and as I gazed around me at the English faces that filled our little cabin, and felt myself

once more under English guidance, I felt a glow of confidence in the future, and said to myself, surely now our uncertainties are at an end, the rest of our course is plain and easy.

There being no ladies on board, the after-cabin was assigned to the princes, with such bedding as they wanted; and, after a good deal of pleasant chat, they retired for the night. Among the passengers who had berths in the first cabin, I found my quarantine friends, Colonel Blane and Captain Duplat, with one or two other gentlemen; so that, weather favouring, we had every hope of a pleasant passage. But we did not sail that night, nor the next morning either, for the agents forced the captain, much against his will, to wait for some goods that were yet to arrive, so that it was past noon before he got his clearance.

At about one o'clock, then, of Saturday the 3rd of December, we set the paddles a-going, and, after all my hopes, fears, disappointments, and anxieties, I need not say how delighted I was at seeing my charges and myself in a fair way of getting clear of the mud of Galatz, and

attaining our ultimate destination of Constantinople; yet the accounts from there were none of the most cheering. Captain Everson, of the steamer, reported that 14,000 persons had died in ten days when the disease was at the worst; but that it was said to have diminished fifty per cent. within the previous fortnight. It was also a satisfaction to hear that there was scarcely any in the European quarter of Pera, and none at Therapia; that the Europeans, in fact, who take precautions, entertain no dread of it.

A little before two we passed the mouth of the Pruth, a stream of some celebrity, and now the boundary between Bessarabia of Russia, and Moldavia of, I can scarcely say, Turkey. One would not have believed that the little creek scarce fifty feet across, and spanned by a wooden bridge of one arch, was the mouth of this important river, which spreads out so wide above in its marshes, and forms the wide lake, Bratich, at Galatz; yet so it is. Rainy, a poor Bessarabian town, or rather straggling village of huts, with some good houses for the Russian officials, lies on the rising bank just below it.

We now observed the arrangements of quarantine on the Russian side: stations formed of huts, with Cossack parties, were placed about an English mile apart from one another; and, as we neared each of these in succession, we saw a Cossack mount, and accompany us along the bank till the next station, which in turn sent out its mounted man to watch us.

About three, we passed Issakchee, a place of considerable magnitude, which had offered a stout resistance to the Russian forces in their last war with Turkey, and where a few good houses appeared, mingled with a multitude of thatched clay hovels. Many vessels, going up the river, passed us on the way; chiefly two-masted things, brigs, or those polacre-rigged vessels of native build. The banks were low and uninteresting: on the right-hand side, at a short distance, were hills covered with brushwood; on the left, the flat plains of Bessarabia. We reached a considerable and pleasantly situated town, called Toolchee, about night-fall; and, as there are some dangerous banks below it, the skipper thought it prudent to come-to for the night, in order

to have the advantage of daylight to pass them.

December 4th, we started a few minutes before seven, and with all the power of steam and advantage of current threaded the tortuous windings of the Delta of the Danube; and by one o'clock, crossing the bar of the Sulina branch, made our entry into the dreaded *Kara Dengiz.* During this long course there is nothing to interest the weary eye, which sees only reeds and grass, or the masts and sails of vessels which appear near, but are many long reaches of the channel distant, and which appear to bear from you in every quarter of the compass, from your own eccentric windings, ere you reach them. Russian posts line the left-hand side all the way down; and where the stream forks, and the St. George's Channel breaks off to the left, there was a gun-boat stationed, with one long gun, and, I think, two smaller ones. About half a mile above the station of Sulina there lay another of the same description, and a third at the station itself.

This station consists of three buildings in-

closed within a range of wooden rails, forming the lazaretto; and two more with some huts, being quarters for the officers and men of the party stationed here. On the right bank there was a group of some half-a-dozen wooden houses with a few huts, and there were several piles of timber. As we were going out, no detention took place; a boat put off with some letters, and that was all our communication from the shore. It is different, I believe, on arriving.

Well! and so there we were in the dreaded *Kara Dengiz*,—Prince, Wali, Timour Meerza, and all: and, Heaven knows! little did it deserve its black name; for a more smiling sea I never sailed upon, and so little of motion, that no one could affect sickness; so we ate and drank, and were merry. All night we ran on; and on the morrow, at eight, when we mustered upon deck, Cape Chabla was astern, and Cape Kalacria, a higher and wooded bluff, but a short way ahead. Between these the land assumed the appearance of low bare downs, presenting white calcareous-looking cliffs or banks to the sea. After ten o'clock

we opened the bay and town of Varna; and, at eleven, came to anchor off the landing-place.

Here part of our party landed; among the rest, Colonel Blane, Captain Duplat, and myself, accompanied Captain Everson to call upon the pasha, and see the town and works. The pasha, a good-looking jolly man, received us very courteously, treated us with coffee, pipes, and sherbet, and conversed for more than half an hour with us; an Italian gentleman of considerable talents and acquirements, in the service of the pasha, and assuming here the name of Rustum Bey, stood interpreter. Through the good offices of this gentleman, we procured a guide to go round the walls of the new works. They were too extensive to be compassed in the time we had to devote to it, but we saw the most important parts. You would not thank me for a description of them, and so I shall refrain from saying more than that when complete, as they very soon will be, Varna will be a very strong place. The Sultan has purchased in England some splendid guns for this and other fort-

resses, and we saw some of the batteries here already armed with them.

The town itself, which, with its minarets and new buildings, makes a pretty appearance from sea, loses greatly when you enter it. It was well paved and clean, and the bazaars were in tolerable order; but there were many ruins, and no great signs of a dense population: it has not by any means recovered the effects of the siege it stood in the war of 1828-9, when taken by the Russians. It is placed in a bay that is too open to be safe in bad weather, and at the opening of a long low tract of country through which flows the river Pravadi from Shoomla.

We started again at two, with a fine calm sea, hoping by next morning to be safe in the Bosphorus, and able to say that no one had suffered a qualm on the way. But, about five in the evening, the wind rose, and with it the sea; and soon was the cabin emptied of its company, though not till all had done honour to a very good dinner. In half an hour, sounds of woe began to issue from the after-cabin, and soon met with accompaniments

from the other berths; they were indications of a still greater agitation in the stomachs of the passengers corresponding with the increasing agitation of the sea. We heard the Wali groaning, Timour retching, the prince *Ai-Wahi*-ing: as for Assad, he was worst of all; he roared and howled as before, tossing about without the smallest regard to the effects of his passion on the surrounding objects, and emitting the most childish expressions of distress. For myself, I found that the enemy was not far off; so I went to my couch,—a hard one it was,—to avoid his power, if possible, by assuming a prostrate attitude. On the whole, for the five or six hours that the breeze continued, it was miserable enough; but after that the wind kindly fell, and when I visited the deck next morning, at daylight, we were going along seven knots an hour, in sight of the Boghâz, or mouth of the Bosphorus.

As for the deck, it displayed a wretched sight enough. It had rained as well as blown during the night, and the unfortunate deck passengers had been permitted to come aft,

which in the day-time is not allowed; and they had laid down their mattresses, or pillows, in all directions, and lay soaking in wet and filth, the consequence of their late emotion. Some of them were women, whom I had not before seen; and I shall never forget the countenance and general appearance of an elderly Turkish dame, who had stowed herself in a nook on the larboard side of the binnacle. But as the day advanced the deck was cleared, and water and mops set to work; so that when we entered the dark-looking jaws of the Bosphorus, and passed the outermost castles, by eight o'clock on the morning of the 6th December, all was once more clean and in order. Need I attempt to express the joy and gratitude with which I perceived ahead the village of Therapia, the flagstaff of the English embassy, and the English colours themselves floating from the mizen-peak of his Majesty's frigate Volage?

The question now was, what next to do? We knew that the princes' *konak* was at Yenikewy, and Yenikewy could be found. But to land baggage and princes at a venture upon

the beach at Yenikewy, and go in search of their lodging, would never do at all. We knew, indeed, that as soon as the steamer's arrival should be known, boats would be sent to take out their royal highnesses and convey them to their konak; but the hour was too early for Turks to be on the alert: and so I resolved to go on board the frigate in the first instance, and learn whether any instructions had been left there for our guidance; and if not, to let the princes go down with the steamer to her berth, and wait on board till preparations for their removal should be made.

The frigate, I found, was in quarantine,—that is, permitted no intercourse with the shore; and there were no instructions for me: so I communicated my plan to the princes, and requested them to wait patiently in the steamer while I made the necessary inquiries. I then accepted the offer of a boat from the frigate to land me at the British palace.

On reaching the landing-place, I found that the palace also was in quarantine; but, on submitting to due fumigation, I was admitted. I found to my great comfort that his excel-

lency had kindly directed accommodations to be prepared for me in the palace: but it was necessary to acquaint the mehmandar appointed to attend the princes, of their arrival; and, as he was at Constantinople, I resolved on going immediately to the steamer where she lay off Seraglio Point, to put the minds of the princes at ease about their destiny, carrying at the same time a whole bundle of letters from their families, which had been waiting their arrival here, to amuse them in the mean while.

On reaching the steamer, I found that information had already reached Mahomed Nedeem Bey, and that he had ordered boats to carry them up to his house at Yenikewy; and a person belonging to the Reis-Effendi, or minister for foreign affairs, arrived on board while I was there, to communicate this intelligence. But as the day was far advanced by that time, and the movements of Turks are not rapid, there was no chance of their royal highnesses being removed till next morning; so, making what arrangements I best could for their entertainment on board, I returned

to the palace at Therapia, and to the enjoyment of social comforts, which were the more delightful from the preceding period of anxiety and uneasiness. You are aware that on a previous occasion I had made the honour of Lord and Lady Ponsonby's acquaintance; and my reception now was marked with the same courteous kindness and frank hospitality which had formerly cheered the weary traveller, and rendered his short stay at Therapia so delightful. It is no wonder that I preserved a pleasant recollection of the Bosphorus, and contemplated a return to its shores with an emotion of gladness, apart from every charm of scenery and beauty; and as I retired at night to my old quarters, now by kind attention much increased in comforts, I could not help hugging myself with a gush of grateful feeling while I said internally, "Here now is the termination of all annoyances; here is a haven in which I may rest in peace for the short remaining period of my work!"

## LETTER X.

On the following morning, after an early breakfast, I went by boat to the house of Nedeem Bey, purposing to continue my way down to Pera, in case the princes were still in the steamer; but they had already arrived, and were in possession of a pleasant apartment overhanging the Bosphorus. It was not, however, in the body of the house; and though the two or three rooms appropriated to the use of their royal highnesses were good, I did not like the situation in an outhouse, and entertained even then some suspicion regarding the degree of respect and attention they were likely to meet with during their residence.

A few days proved the justice of these suspicions; for, on my coming to call on them

at Yenikewy, I saw that something was not quite satisfactory, and, upon pressing the prince he somewhat reluctantly admitted that they had been greatly disappointed in the attendance and food provided for them; that the latter, in particular, was far from excellent in quality, and miserably deficient in quantity. This was confirmed by the interpreter, whom I closely questioned on the subject.

Knowing the conduct of Orientals in such matters, I was quite prepared to credit this; and when you consider the case, and are made aware of the mode in which it is customary for Asiatic chiefs to entertain their guests, you will be the less astonished at the fact. You know, I presume, that it is customary among the sovereigns and chiefs of the East to consider all travellers of rank and distinction who enter or pass through their dominions as their guests, and to provide for their reception and entertainment in the various towns and cities in their route, frequently defraying the whole expense of their journey, and always providing for their whole wants during the period of their visit at the capital. But as

there are not in the East any hotels or lodging-houses fit to receive such guests, and as it is not the custom to permit them to reside at a public caravanserai, it is usual for the sovereign to appoint some one of his nobles or courtiers as mehmandar, to attend upon the guest and provide what may be requisite, the house of the mehmandar being generally appointed as his place of abode. It is understood, and formerly no doubt was the case, that the sovereign defrays all the expenses of this entertainment; but in these latter days, when the prosperity and riches of Eastern sovereigns have become wofully diminished, this latter part of the arrangement has been very much departed from, and the unfortunate mehmandars have been left to reimburse themselves as they best can, or to trust to the present which first originated in courteous liberality, but which now custom has made it imperative for the guest to bestow upon his mehmandar at his departure.

Now you can well conceive that, under such arrangement, the duty of mehmandar is not greatly coveted; and that, when imposed, it

is discharged often with a greater view to economy than to the comfort and convenience of the guest: such, no doubt, was the case in the present instance. To announce the arrival of persons in the rank of princes, even though in their peculiar circumstances, was indispensable on grounds of local usage as much as of common courtesy; and to have omitted doing so would have been a failure in what was due to the Sultan. It lay with his highness to decide on what terms their royal highnesses were to be received, and how treated during their stay in his dominions; it was decided accordingly that they were to be received as his highness's guests and Mahomed Nedeem Bey, a person of some distinction, was appointed their mehmandar.

But it appeared that their royal highnesses became early the objects of intrigue and ill-will. A Persian merchant of no high character, Mahomed Aga by name, who acts as a sort of agent or consul for Persia, hearing of this intended attention on the part of the Porte, thought fit to go and remonstrate, as on the part of his sovereign, and to protest against

any attention being shown by the friends and allies of his master to persons whom he chose to brand with the epithets of rebels and enemies of the Shah.

The reply of the minister for foreign affairs to this tirade was calm and dignified: "His master, the Sultan," he said, "seeing in these young princes only persons of the royal blood in misfortune, and, not being free agents, in no wise committed as rebels by the acts to which they might have been forced by their late father, could not depart from the usages of civilized nations, and must consult his own honour and the laws of hospitality in providing for their comfort while resident in his dominions; and in this mode of conduct his highness felt assured that he was consulting, not only the honour, but the wishes, of his ally the Shah."

So far so well. It was not, perhaps, the fault of his highness that Mahomed Nedeem Bey did not fulfil to the proper extent his royal intentions; and again, the mehmandar might throw the blame upon his servants. Be that as it may, I urged the princes, and de-

sired the interpreter to tell the servants that if such inattention continued, complaints should undoubtedly be made in the proper quarter, the effects of which they no doubt would feel. But the threat did not appear to convey much terror. For a day or two, indeed, I learned that things went better, and the princes entertained hopes of enjoying more comfort and respect. But whether it was that the habitual hatred of the Turks for Persians weighed with the master as well as with the servants, or that they really were ignorant and boorish persons whose rough manners were not formed to assume the appearance of respect, I know not; but they soon relapsed, and became inattentive as before. As for the food, I have had occasion to believe that the Turks themselves are extremely moderate in their appetites, and are easily satisfied, both in respect to the quantity and quality of their food. It was now, too, the Ramazan, or Mahometan Lent; and I knew, by former experience, that in this season starvation is the order of the day. Besides, the state of the country from the reigning malady made everything scarce; in

short, there was no want of excuses for the short commons of which their royal highnesses complained.

Willingly would Lord Ponsonby have co-operated in any plan for increasing the comfort of the princes; but here again, the state of the country, and other circumstances, interfered to forbid such assistance. To remove them to another house would have been impossible; such an affront upon the Sultan's hospitality would have been unpardonable, and might have led to the worst consequences: and besides, where, at a moment's warning, in a place where houses are particularly scarce, were we to find one, of the safety of which from infection we might be satisfied? how to obtain the requisite furniture and conveniences, and suitable servants?

An attempt was made, indeed, to procure the latter; but none in whom confidence was to be placed could be found: so, after much consideration, it was thought better to allow things to rest as they were for the short remaining period, and in the mean time to supply their royal highnesses occasionally with such

comforts as could be easily sent from the palace. . . . . .

And what was then the true state of the capital and its environs, in point of plague, at this time? you will ask. Why, bad enough in all conscience. It is said, the contagion on this occasion was imported from Egypt. This was scarcely necessary, seeing that the disease is never totally extinct in Constantinople. Be that as it may, some cases appeared in July; they increased during August and September; and in October and November, instead of diminishing with the approach of winter, the malady attained its height. Various accounts are given of the extent of mortality. More than twelve hundred a day are said to have died for some time; and, some little while after I arrived, the number of deaths was variously stated at from sixty-five thousand to one hundred thousand souls; but in Constantinople, as in all Eastern cities, where no census of the population is ever taken, no register of deaths and burials exists, nor any *sanitary* police whatever, such statements are vague and uncertain: that the mortality was great, was known from

other sources. At the barrack of Rama Chifflic two regiments of regular troops were more than half swept off. At Buyookderch, where there were four hundred men in barracks, they lost in the same proportion. The great burying-grounds at Pera and Scutari were full of graves: those parts nearest the city were turned so completely up that they resembled ploughed fields; and you seldom went past, without meeting bodies carried to their last home. In our walks about the hills behind the villages, we constantly met parties of infected people, driven from their homes to take up their abode in the plague-huts that dotted the heights all round: these increased in number every day; and at St. Dimitri, a quarter of Constantinople near the top of the Golden-horn, there was a perfect town of them. You could not go out without observing signs of precaution or infection. The attendants from the plague-hospitals might occasionally be seen at the doors or windows of houses, indicating what was going on within: and now and then you met a miserable haggard skeleton dragging his slow length along upon a stick, for

whom all made room to pass; he was one of those who had had, and was recovering from, the disease.

The Franks, and those who believed in the value of precautions, went about wrapped in wax or oil-skin cloaks, with sticks in their hands to keep off suspicious characters; and you saw most people gathering the skirts of their garments together, making themselves small, and giving their neighbours a wide berth, that no casual touch might communicate the dread contagion.

As for the poor princes, arrived on the scene of its ravages, and feeling the consequences of them in personal privations, all their horror of plague returned in full force, and they were sadly distressed; first, on account of the danger they ran during their stay; and, secondly, as to that which they should incur in travelling through Asia Minor, and full of anxiety as to the precautions which were to be taken to avoid it. They attempted to place themselves in a sort of quarantine, and to establish certain sanitary regulations, the utility of which they had heard vaunted: they forbade any one to

be admitted without their orders, got up a sort of smoking-box, and had chairs provided for visitors to sit on instead of permitting them to sit on the divans. In all this I encouraged them; but they had more wayward materials to encounter in the persons of their Turkish servants. "*Wullah!* Saheb Fraser," said the prince, "these *ghorumsaugs* of servants will be the means of giving us the plague; they do not pay the smallest attention to what I say, they let in anybody who comes here; and when we ask them why, and abuse them for it, they call us infidels — unbelievers. They say that the plague only comes to those whom God pleases, and that those who die of it go to Paradise; and therefore it is sinful to do as we do, and take precautions against a message of the Almighty. Now *our* faith tells us it is sinful to put ourselves in the way of danger. By your head! I am afraid of these fellows. I wish you could get us some good trust-worthy servants who would obey our orders, and see that others do so too."

The prince was right. The Turks entertain the fatal notion, that precautions are use-

less, to avoid contagion sinful, and that those who die of it go to Paradise. I have been assured by medical men, that in the harems, where the women and children are all huddled together, the sick and infected are not separated from those yet in health; the child is not taken from the sick mother. There was an old Turk, who had lost almost all his family,—seventeen in number, I think,—but who had a favourite daughter, yet a child, still remaining, and which was left in the very room, and was lying on the very beds where all its relatives, mother and all, had died. He was recommended to remove the child, lest she too might catch the infection. The Turk shrugged his shoulders; "*Allah kereem!*" said he, (God is merciful!) and the child was suffered to remain.

I heard of one young girl in a similar condition; her father or her husband had died, and she was urged to remove from the place,—I believe from beside the body: but she rejected the advice with indignation; and, when sensible of having taken the infection, expressed gladness instead of sorrow, "for now," said she, "I am sure of Paradise!"

There was a Turk, a colonel in the army, who, from a superior cast of mind, and by associating more than most of his countrymen with Europeans, had imbibed something of their opinions and more liberal ways of thinking. He had picked up a little French and Italian, and was well received at the different European embassies, particularly at the French and English palaces, and evinced a strong disposition to avail himself of the information and advice he received there. He had a command of four hundred men, to whom the plague was communicated by means of some uniforms sent up from Constantinople, and his people began to drop off fast. After losing one hundred and eighty men out of his four hundred, he thought it high time to depart from Turkish usages, and to take measures for putting a stop to the disorder, and saving the rest. He had all the uniforms and clothes washed, and the men were made also to bathe themselves in the Bosphorus. The apartments were all fumigated and purified, and measures were adopted to keep fresh contagion, as much as possible, at a distance.

The Aga of the castles on the Bosphorus hearing of these doings,—perhaps informed of it by some good-natured well-wisher of the colonel,—came, as if in the course of his duty, to visit the post. Here he made inquiries as to the state of health, and, on hearing what had been done to restore salubrity, "Bah!" said he, "all nonsense! give me pen, ink, and paper; I'll give you a cure for the plague." When the writing materials were brought, he scrawled some hieroglyphics upon the paper, verses from the Koran probably, and, handing it to the colonel, said, "There; stick that upon the door, you will have no more plague."

Soon afterwards, regular complaints were sent in against the colonel for his conduct in taking precautions against plague. The bathing the men, the washing uniforms, &c. were all detailed as grave offences; and so serious did Haleel Pasha, the new serasker, or commander-in-chief, and son-in-law to the Sultan, deem them, that when the colonel attended at head-quarters, in consequence of his order, the pasha would not even see him, but sent word to him outside, to say, that he was no

longer an officer. On hearing this, the poor colonel declared that he had only acted in conformity with the late serasker's instructions, which directed him positively to apply for, and attend to, the advice which might be given him from the Frank ambassadors on certain points; and it was the lucky preservation of that order, which had not been reversed, alone, which prevented his actual dismissal: but he was warned to play no more such tricks, on pain of what he had now escaped; and, I believe, though formerly a great favourite with the Sultan, that he has since retired from the army. I fear such facts—and there are many like them—do not speak much for the advance of the present race of Turks in freedom from prejudices, or liberality of opinion; certainly not, at all events, of those about the court.

It was not that the disease did not visit those in high places. It entered the house of the Reis-Effendi, and destroyed his wife and other members of his family. He was himself taken ill, and people thought it must be the plague, although the medical men said it was but a slight paralytic affection. The first

dragoman of the English embassy, Mr. Pisani, whose duty required his constant intercourse with the minister, in spite of personal risk, went to the sick man's house, and found him lying in the very room—they say, on the very same bed—in which his wife had so lately died; and Mr. Pisani was forced to sit down beside him, in order to hear the answers which the sick minister could scarcely articulate to his questions. No purification had taken place, and the disease was still in the house. The fact of the dragoman not taking the plague any more than his excellency, may go to show that infection is not always the necessary consequence of contagion, as has been imagined; but says little for the minister's good sense on this point.

But fatalism and folly have not at all times been the only coadjutors of pestilence. We have heard of *Les quatre voleurs*, and fiends worse even than they are to be found in human shape. It was during the decline of a former plague at this place, that a widow lady and her three daughters, wearied of the strict confinement in which during the height of the

malady they had lived, were tempted to leave their home on a visit to a friend. During dinner, the youngest daughter, a beautiful girl, complained of illness; she was instantly carried home, and carefully tended by her mother and sisters during a painful and feverish night. In the morning, the medical man who was called saw the truth at a glance, but, knowing that infection must have taken place, would not alarm the unhappy lady: it was plague, and the next day the daughter died. The poor mother, in paying the last duties to her child, saw the fatal spot upon its bosom, and knowing that her own doom was in all human probability sealed, kissed its cold brow, and then calmly and at once removed with her two remaining children to an hospital, merely entreating that *they* might be lodged apart from the infected inmates.

It appeared that the mortality in this hospital had been strikingly great, insomuch that nurses and attendants could scarcely be had to perform the requisite duties to the sick. But there was one man, a priest, who persevered in his attendance both here and at the

private houses of those who remained to die at home; he confessed the dying, performed the last offices of religion, listened to their last wishes, and soothed them with promises of seeing them performed, all with the most heroic contempt of danger to himself. To the sick widow did this charitable priest repair, so soon as he heard of her arrival in the hospital, and encouraged her to tell him all that lay upon her mind. The lady availed herself of his kindness, explained to him her circumstances, and informed him of her worldly means, and her wishes regarding its disposal. The priest undertook to fulfil all her wishes, and then proposed to administer the sacrament. But observing that she looked exhausted, he pressed her first to take a cordial which he would himself prepare; and with the words he took from his pocket a powder, which he began to mix in a cup which he also had brought. "No," said the lady, "I do not require it; but if I must take it, prepare it in this silver cup; it was my husband's, and I never drink out of any other." The priest reluctantly consented; but whether it was sus-

picion or unconscious apprehension, she declared she could not drink it then, and requested the holy sacrament might at once be administered, declaring that so ill did she feel herself, it might otherwise be too late. During his performance of this duty, she watched his countenance and manner;—suspicion was confirmed. After the service was concluded, he again pressed on her the cordial; she received the cup, but instantly pressing her other hand to her head, screamed out for assistance—that she was dying. Her cry brought in the medical man and the attendants. "Seize that man!" she exclaimed, and presenting the cup to the physician, pointed out to him the discoloured metal, and stated her conviction. The ingredients being tested, proved her correctness, for they were poison. The priest was delivered over to the consul of his nation, by whom he was banished; and there remained no doubt that much of the mortality that had been remarked in the quarter was owing to his treacherous assistance, and for the purpose of robbing the dead: he was the worst of murderers. It was the will of God that the lady who was the instru-

ment of his detection should recover; and one of her two daughters, both of whom are alive, related these particulars to the friend who gave them to me. Indeed, I knew her myself.

To add to the alarm of the princes, Timour Meerza was taken ill. Pains in the bones, headache, and sickness, were not things to be viewed without mistrust in these times; but his brothers attacked these symptoms vigorously. Without sending for any one, lest the alarm should be taken, they gave him, from the stores they had brought with them from London, a dose of tartar emetic, and afterwards of jalap, which did their business well; and though, when I visited them, I found him still flushed and feverish, the disease had been chiefly subdued: a doctor was instantly sent for, but before he came they had followed up their practice by administering a dose of James's powders, and he found little more to do than finish what they had so boldly but luckily begun. He set them at their ease as to plague: but they had not failed to remark the cautious distance at which I kept when they told me that Timour Meerza was

ill; he even observed it himself, and honoured me with a very quizzical grimace, as much as to say, "I know what you're at, but I will cheat you yet." In fact, so little subdued were his spirits, that he could not resist putting a practical joke upon his brother the Wali, in return, I presume, for the fright which the Wali had given them at Bucharest. Finding himself restless, and not inclined to sleep, he thought probably that no one else should do so; so he began first to moan and complain, and after a while broke out into violent exclamations of distress, roaring out, "Ai Wali, ai Wali! keep away from me—keep away from me—I have the plague—by your head! I have the plague; here is a large tumour under my arm." The Wali, poor man! roused from sleep by this terrible announcement, ran towards him with horror and bewilderment in his looks; the wicked Timour enjoyed his brother's perplexity for a few moments, and then burst out a-laughing in his face. The people in the house, however, had taken the alarm in good earnest, after I left him yesterday; and, Turks though they were, ran away from the place, leaving the princes to their fate.

On returning next day across the hills, I wished to take a sketch from a point of view which promised something good; and was just going to enter a sort of little building that seemed placed there expressly for the purpose, when I found it occupied by a party of poor plague-smitten Armenians. This did not look like diminution, any more than the additional rough-boarded huts that appeared daily on the sides of the hills, nor the occurrence of two cases in the village of Therapia close by the palace, and of four more in the Turkish battery just beyond; in short, there was enough to remind us that the fiend was abroad, —yet at the palace we felt it not. All there was peace, and quiet rational enjoyment. Our society consisted generally of Captain Richards of the Volage frigate, my fellow-passenger Captain Duplat, and a brother officer of his, and some of the members of the other missions, cautious persons who, like ourselves, lived under strict precautions; and most comfortable we found ourselves.

Visits passed between his excellency and the princes, who were also waited on by some other members of the corps diplomatique and

of the English party; and they dined once or twice at the palace,—a great enjoyment to them, for it put them in mind of London, and the happy days,—they now thought them supremely so—that they had spent there.

Time wore on; their situation had not become much more comfortable. Their mehmandar, Mahomed Nedeem Bey, instead of personally superintending the arrangements for their comfort, deputed some hanger-on or servant to this duty, and seldom came near them; and, excepting one visit paid to them by a person on the part of another of the ministers, Purteb Pasha, no Turk had bid them welcome, or thought of relieving their solitude by his society. They now began to feel that there was less danger than at first apprehended of being oppressed by the civilities of their imaginary friends, or of requiring fine apartments to receive them in, and a train of servants to support their dignity. A state of plague might account for some omissions, but could not excuse the total neglect, on the part of the Turks, under which the poor princes felt they were suffering.

They were now very anxious for their departure. At first there had been question in their minds of horses and equipage, and servants and tents; they imagined they must travel, as in Persia, with their full establishments in their train. It took me no small trouble to convince them that in Turkey every man travels either by the regular post or by caravan; the latter was out of question, and all that was required for the former was saddles and horse-equipage to put upon the posters they would find at every stage; for as to accommodation, that, such as the country afforded, they would find in the coffee-houses at each post, or in konacks in private houses of the villages they should halt at. This explanation, however, they viewed with suspicion, in spite of the "truth and justice" of all Saheb Fraser's words; the stubborn Shahzadigee and pride of rank was still at work; nor could I gain belief until I brought in a humble coadjutor, in the person of a well-known character, "Mustapha Aga," an old Tatar, and now one of the consul-general's servants, who marshals the travelling plans

and provides the equipment, of all English travellers from Constantinople, and knows the roads throughout Turkey as well as a postman in London knows his beat. This personage I sent up to their royal highnesses, who, after pumping at him and cross-questioning him in private for a whole forenoon, found out once more that Saheb Fraser had told the truth; a fact which the poor prince owned to me afterwards with sighs at his own disappointment, and some confusion of face.

## LETTER XI.

It now became necessary to know whether it was the intention of the Porte to send a mehmandar with the princes to Baghdad, or to leave them to proceed at their own discretion; in which case I was prepared to furnish them with a confidential Tatar, to convey them to their destination. The latter plan would have in some respects been preferable, as leaving the princes more at their own disposal; but, as some of the districts through which their royal highnesses would have to pass were not in a very quiet condition, it was thought that an officer on the part of the Sultan might conduce more to their security, particularly in case of a military escort being required.

The question, however, was decided by the appointment of a mehmandar on the part of

the Sultan, who in due time repaired to Yenikewy, and reported himself to the princes as having received commands to expedite their journey. The day was even fixed for their departure, and their preparations were complete, when either a new light dawned upon the Sublime Porte, or some fresh intrigue set on foot against the princes was successful; for, on the very day preceding that of their intended departure, the same gentleman who had waited on them before on the part of Purteb Pasha, now again made his appearance to inform them that the Porte foresaw danger and embarrassment in their proceeding to Baghdad, where there were already too many princes of the blood of Persia, and that therefore, instead of going there, it desired that their royal highnesses should make choice of some other city in the Ottoman dominions for their residence. This news the Wali himself hurried up to inform me of; and it was confirmed, upon official inquiry, by the Reis-Effendi himself.

On my waiting on the princes, which I did as soon as possible after receiving this most unexpected announcement, I found them in a

condition that might have moved the compassion of their bitterest enemy. What had they done, they asked, to be treated thus? they were neither robbers nor murderers; they had never injured any man, and least of all the Sultan! What had they committed to be thus driven to and fro upon the face of the earth, outcasts as they now were, and even a resting-place denied them? what dust had fallen on their heads! what a dirt-defiled fate was theirs! They even professed to entertain doubts regarding their own safety, when they found that the government of such a country could break its word to unfortunate refugees, after promising them favour and hospitality; but, if it ever pleased God to send them to where they might once more rejoin their families, they would give up the world and its vanities, and become *Gosheh nisheens*, hermits, and attend to the good of their souls.

I did what I could to comfort them; told them that this was but a passing cloud, which, like others, would blow away; they had endured much, but every day that passed, every obstacle conquered, brought them yet

more near to the goal; and that the object of their hope would assuredly be accomplished at last. I could not, however, refrain from remarking that now they must see how disinterested had been the advice given them in England, to accept of a passage to the Mediterranean by sea, when, by the endurance of perhaps a week's discomfort, they would have avoided all the delays and annoyances they had been unavoidably subjected to on their land trip; and, having been at once conveyed to Beyroot, would have by this time been happy in the society of their wives and children. "Ah! would to God we had been so wise as to have listened to our English friends!" exclaimed the elder prince; "but we were blind and foolish: now, too late, we see our folly; we see that the English government have always been our real friends, and you, Saheb Fraser, our true and sincere adviser. As for these infidel Turks, men without faith or fear, what have they to do with us? let them just let us alone—all we want is to be let alone; we want no mehmandar," &c. &c.

In fact, it was a most cruel proceeding. It

was perfectly known that these poor people had left their wives and children, and other relatives, at Baghdad; and that, therefore, to Baghdad they must return, or submit to what amounted to a divorcement from their families: for the family of an Oriental, particularly when of rank, does not merely consist of wife and children; there are many wives, besides slaves, servants, mothers, sisters, and connexions, who are all included in the household, and must move with it where it moves. There were two or three hundred persons at that very time awaiting the return of these princes to Baghdad; and to move these to meet them at any other city would have been impossible, it was a mockery to propose it; and that the Porte must have felt.

His excellency the ambassador saw the hardship of the case, and took it up with all the zeal of a kind and benevolent mind: he remonstrated not only on the grounds of common humanity and hospitality, but of their own previous promises; and demanded that the obstacles to the departure of the princes should be removed, and permission granted for them

to rejoin their families. But the influence, whatever it was, that raised these obstacles, was powerful, and the opposition obstinate. It was urged that the Porte had a full and indisputable right to prescribe the terms of residence within its dominions to aliens desiring to settle there; that, when a favour is requested, it is unreasonable in the petitioner to prescribe the mode of granting it; that, when a man agrees to accept you as his guest, it does not become you to insist on having your choice of the rooms in his house. The princes, in order to facilitate the arrangement, and smooth difficulties, proposed to reside at Kerbelah or Nejeff, holy places, where they meant to dedicate themselves to a religious life, abandon the world, and fit themselves for eternity. The reply was, that there were strong reasons against consenting to that course; and the reasons, just as frivolous and vexatious as the rest of the proceeding, were given. "See!" said the prince, "observe what infidel dogs these are; how bitter they are against us; they not only wish to prevent my comfort and

peace in this world, but to destroy my happiness in that which is to come!"

It would weary rather than interest you to hear the progress of this most unworthy and disgusting altercation: which, through the firm and decided tone of representation observed by Lord Ponsonby, terminated in a guarded and reluctant permission being obtained for their royal highnesses to proceed to Baghdad, where once arrived, their future residence there or elsewhere was to depend on circumstances yet to happen. What the evil influence was, which thus maliciously and cruelly interfered to torment men already victims of misfortune, I shall not take upon me to say. I trust, however, that, thus baffled in its mischievous intent, it may never again have power to harm these interesting objects of British good-will and protection.

The condition of the princes themselves, during this long and painful negotiation, was truly deplorable. Unaccustomed to bear up against misfortune, they were weighed down by the idea that fate was utterly adverse to

them, that they should never more see their families; and they even conceived the existence of some plot to deliver them up to the Persian authorities, in order that they might be sent to the Shah. This, of course, I treated as a mere wild chimera, unworthy of a moment's entertainment; but with regard to the inhumanity of the proceeding as it stood, I had no defence to make for that. "Ay," said the prince, "the Sultan eats, and drinks, and makes merry: he thinks not of those whom a word of his mouth now could make happy, and whom he keeps here in misery, cursing his very name. He goes every night to his harem, and has his women to comfort him and tend upon him; he little thinks of those who pine to meet wives whom for two years they have not seen. For two years, Saheb Fraser, no woman has smoothed my pillow, or shown me tenderness; and they, ah! where are they? God knows whether they are yet alive!—how they exist!—how they get bread to eat!"

But the mind cannot always entertain gloomy emotions. The beauty of the weather, and a longing for fresh air, tempted them

sometimes out of doors; and Timour got his gun in order, and they would cross the Bosphorus to shoot the waterfowl which they saw in the watercourses of the valleys opposite.

One day when I popped in upon them, as usual, at Yenekewy, I found them,—that is, the two younger and the servant,—busily employed in,—what do you think? why, roasting and eating *Ames damnées*—Anglicè, Damned souls! Timour had more than once recounted to me great exploits of his in the shooting way,—he had killed so many of a kind of duck: now ducks, that is, wild-ducks, are not over-plenty in the Bosphorus, and I knew that Timour never went far for his game; so I expressed a wish to see some of these same ducks, which they assured me were most excellent eating. This day I came in for the sight, and recognised my poor old friends, the restless birds of the Bosphorus that flit in great flocks to and fro, hurrying from the Black Sea to that of Marmora, and back, without any apparent motive, and never, as it is said, alighting on land or sea. It was these halcyon birds, by the French, for their rest-

lessness, called "*Les ames damnées*," against which Timour had waged unhallowed war; these were his wild-ducks; and I saw him this day gloating over a pile of nine bleeding carcases, which he was preparing to add to the scrimp fare of Mahomed Nedeem Bey's dinner. He again assured me that they were excellent eating, and begged me to take a brace to present to the ambassador's lady.

When the permission, of which I have spoken, was at length obtained from the Porte, intelligence of it was immediately conveyed to the princes, who sent up the Wali, their man of business on all such occasions, to announce it to me. In accompanying him to the door, on his return, we passed through the apartment where the table was laid out for dinner. "*Ai Wahi, ai Wahi!*" said he, as he looked at the well-known apparatus; "this reminds me of London. Ah! when shall we see the like again!"

In the same manner, when the departure of their royal highnesses was supposed to be close at hand, and they were invited to dine at the palace with a sort of leave-taking party, the

poor prince bewailed himself grievously at the sight of all the luxuries and comforts of European life, which they were about to quit for ever. "Alas!" said he, "this is the last of English dinners that I shall see. Henceforth I must eat like a beast, with my fingers, or with one villanous wooden spoon among us three; and these (turning to Lady Ponsonby and the other ladies,) these are the last of such ladies I shall behold. Woe's me! woe's me! Tell her ladyship that my very heart turns to water at thinking I shall never see her more."—"Ah!" said the Wali, "Saheb Fraser, no more champagne: come, let us have one more glass now, at least."

In truth, the constant themes of their conversations at this time were either their hoped-for meeting with their families, or a recapitulation of the delights of London, and the happiness they had experienced there; and they would go over the names of the friends they had left there, particularly of the ladies, with an emphasis of expression that showed how much they felt. England and the English people had risen in their estimation every step they

had made away from it; for every step had brought a diminution of comfort, and attention, and importance; and the last step was worst of all. They had really imbibed a taste for European habits, and admired the cleanliness of our customs; they preferred using knives and forks, even when alone, to eating with their fingers, and got me to procure for them some pairs to use on the way. The prince himself used often to talk vaguely of coming again to England, and they all said they would come and visit me in Scotland. Timour would shoot grouse; and the Wali would go and see a certain lady-friend of his, whose home was in that country: but the prince talked more seriously, not of coming himself, but of sending his son, his well-beloved and favourite son,—he whose picture you may remember on his handsome dagger,—to have the advantage of an English education. "He would send him to my care," he said, "with one servant; he might be boarded near his friend and countryman, Meerza Ibrahim, who would superintend his studies;" and he entered into all the details of expense which such a

plan would involve, with as much earnestness as if it were actually determined on. Poor man! at least it was of use to wile away a heavy hour.

And they had many such yet to spend; their departure was not so near as might have been imagined. It is true that the consent was obtained, a mehmandar was appointed, and all the material points settled; but Turks do not move with rapidity, and the snail-paced progress of official business protracted forms and trifles from day to day till weeks passed away, and the heart once more became sick from hope deferred.

It was, I think, on the 17th of January that the acquiescence of the Porte in their desire of proceeding to Baghdad was announced to them; a mehmandar was appointed soon after, and yet it was the 3rd or 4th of February before they could manage to prepare the requisite firmauns and passports, just two months from the time of their arrival here. About the first or second days of that month, the weather, which had till then for the most part been fine, broke up with one of the most violent storms of wind

and snow I ever remember to have seen, which lasted with more or less fury for eight or nine days: during this time it would have been impossible for the princes to move; yet the preparations might, one would think, have gone on. It was not so, however: at last, on the 9th, when the weather moderated, the mehmandar called to say that he would not be ready to start till the fourth day forward, that is, on the 13th.

At this time their royal highnesses were subjected to another, and to them very serious inconvenience. The interpreter, Assad Khayât, who, to his praise be it spoken, had attended them alike as servant and companion, in comfort and distress, in weal and woe, with a patience and zeal which nothing could either weary or exceed, had been obliged by domestic events, after waiting six weeks in vain for their departure, to take his leave of them and return to his own home. This left them more than ever dependant on their remaining servants. During the distress attendant on the prince's illness at Galatz, where all the attendance possible was required, the man, of

whom I have made *dis*honourable mention as a convicted thief, was perforce taken into favour and employment, and he had continued to attend upon them ever since. What new ground of quarrel had arisen, I know not, but on going to Yenikewy one day, the prince informed me, with a sort of affected indifference, that Assad Oolla Khan had from his own good pleasure tendered his resignation, and had accordingly left the place. I inquired whether any cause had been assigned for this unexpected desertion. "What cause could such a *Kumbucht*—such an ungrateful wretch—have for leaving us when he knows we need him, but that he *is* a *Kumbucht?* He said to Timour Meerza there, that he knew very well we could never forgive him the faults he had been guilty of; that we only kept him on while we wanted his services, and would send him to the devil when we should have reached Baghdad: but he was resolved we should not play him this trick; and therefore he would leave us now, when he might make his way home easily: so he is gone. And now, Saheb Fraser," continued he,

his lip quivering with emotion, "we are, thanks be to God! alone. Not a man have I to send upon an errand if I were dying. Well, God is great!—it has been otherwise with me. But there, you see the Wali has turned pipe-cleaner for me; not a soul have we to give us a caleoon; for I would rather want it than to be always beholden to these *ghorumsaugs* of Turks, who seem as if they would spit in my face while they are serving me. *Khaneh abadeh Wali, zehmut Keskeedeed!*—prosperity to you, Wali; you have my thanks. God knows I needed it," added he, taking from the Wali's hand the caleoon, which he had actually cleaned and made ready for his brother with his own hands. Next day I found the Wali and Timour Meerza hard at work peeling walnuts, picking raisins, and preparing other ingredients for making a Persian stew of one or two of their old friends, the "Ames damnées," which they had plucked and cut up with their own princely hands for the purpose; they had no one to do it for them.

All this was most painful to me, as I saw how severely it affected the spirits of the elder

prince, although he tried to brave it out even when tears of wounded pride and self-compassion were standing in his eyes; and I felt it the more as it was totally out of my power to remedy the evil, for no servants were to be had at such a time. Persians were quite out of the question; and as for Turks, even had it been possible to procure persons worthy of confidence, they would not have suited the princes a bit better than those placed about them by their mehmandar. So patience again was the only cure; and a few days afterwards they were fortunate enough to procure a Persian servant from an uncle of theirs, Prince Allah Verdee Meerza, who had come to Constantinople a few weeks before, and whose presence had greatly contributed to their gratification.

Still, what with these *contretemps*, and the repeated and vexatious delays, the prince had lost all patience, and it became to me a positive pain to go there and listen to his bitter lamentations and complaints, to which I could neither offer reply nor consolation. To preach patience was useless, patience was long

since exhausted; and he would break out into torrents of abuse against the Sultan, the Reis-Effendi, and every Osmanlee in Turkey, and bequeath them his bitter curse for their heartless cruelty to him and to his brothers. Often did he say, "We are not surely prisoners! what have we done to lose our liberty? Oh God! for freedom, for freedom only! Let us but go, and we will travel barefoot; we want neither mehmandar, nor money, nor firmauns; all we want is to be put free upon the hill-side, and to make our way as best we can. To these ravings of a mind embittered by constant vexation and disappointment, there could of course be no reply. I permitted the passion to exhaust itself, and terminate, as it sometimes did, in tears; and then would make some quiet observation, such as that a day was not a month, and a week not a year: that, however slowly, it was plain things were going on, and must come to the desired point at last; and so on. But when on Sunday the 12th, on going to see them, I learned that the mehmandar had had the assurance to send another message, procrastinating once more the day

of departure, as I was assured, for his own purposes and convenience, and not for any business of the princes, I got myself into as good a passion as they themselves could desire, insomuch that they in their turn took the part of peace-makers, and tried to smooth me down. However, as their host Mahomed Nedeem Bey was in his house, I sent for him; and, as he understood Persian, told him my opinion of the other mehmandar's conduct; adding, that I should instantly return to the palace, and request Lord Ponsonby to direct an inquiry to be made into the causes of the delay.

This his lordship was kind enough to do; and the consequence was, that on Tuesday, the 14th February, I was awakened at seven in the morning by a message from the princes to say that the mehmandar had just sent to say he would be there in an hour to take them away; and that, if I did not come to them immediately, I should be too late to receive their, "*Khoda hafiz.*" This was, at last, an unexpected, though not, I must confess, an unwelcome hearing. I had been too much

harassed by all that had passed for the last few months to be anything but pleased at the business being brought to a termination; and, though I entertained a very sincere regard for the princes, I could not conceal from myself that the charge had become a burthen from which I must rejoice to be relieved. Yet who can part with those who have been associates and objects of solicitude for a considerable space of time without a pang of sorrow? There are ties that spring from the heart, and wind themselves about such objects, which must give pain when snapped. My connexion with these princes had been of no common kind; it had, indeed, been of a very mingled yarn, and anxiety and vexation had formed too great a share in it. Yet I felt that there was much sincere good-will and attachment on their side, as there was of warm and friendly interest on mine; nay, more,—an almost parental feeling, produced by the dependent helplessness of their situation: and as a wayward child is often the favourite of its parents, thus the little pettish frowardnesses under which I had frequently smarted, vanished before the re-

membrance of the many good and noble qualities which had in reality endeared them not only to me, but to all who knew them well. These were the thoughts that filled my mind as I threw myself into a boat, and rowed fast to Yenikewy for the last time! The mild dignity and affectionate kindness of the elder prince, the rough but kindly oddity of the Wali, my first acquaintance, and the frank and open-hearted warmth of the gallant Timour Meerza, were all present to my mind; and a lump, I do confess it, rose in my throat as I thought "I shall see them all no more!"

A short while brought me to their door: there they were in their travelling attire, *shulwars, kulejeh,* and all, in high spirits; the Wali a most comical figure, with the skirts of all his garments stuffed into his wide breeches. They all flocked about me open-mouthed, to rejoice over their immediate departure, and to pour out their thankfulness that God had at last granted them the hope at least of revisiting their families. But then came the parting, and their spirits fell. I hate such scenes, and cannot describe them: they

were affected sincerely, I believe; and the elder prince turned away to conceal an emotion which I certainly participated in myself. They charged me with thousands of kindnesses to their friends in England, at Bucharest, at the palace,—bushels of letters they had given me before: they embraced me *à-la-mode de Perse*, commended me to the care of God, received from me a like and very sincere adieu, and I left them. By nine o'clock I was back in my chamber at the palace.

Thus terminated my intercourse with these princes; and, in spite of my regard for them, I must say that now, for the first time these several months, I breathed freely. I even felt lighter as I sprung up the stair to my chamber; and fervent was the prayer of thankfulness which I ejaculated when I reached it, and sat down for a moment to think on all that had passed.

I had now completed my task, and fulfilled my duty to the best of my power and means: the time expended had far exceeded that which had been contemplated when I set out; there now only remained to lose no more, but

to make the best of my way homewards. The rest of this day was devoted to arrangements for departure; and at night I took leave, with a full heart, of those to whose most hospitable kindness I had been indebted for rendering the last two months a period of enjoyment instead of gloom; for, however many might be the causes of vexation and disappointment during that period, from them I was ever sure of finding sympathy and aid.

I take it, that, as we advance in life, the principle of *radication* becomes more powerful; at all events, the process of uprooting is more painful: for my own part, so tired am I of change, that when chance leaves me for even a month or two unexpectedly in one place, I feel myself rapidly striking roots, which, when the time of removal comes, it is most distressing to tear up; and thus it was at Therapia. With a thousand motives for terminating my stay there, and hastening homewards, I felt myself at length putting forth fibres of attachment, which, nourished by the dew of kindness, became too vigorous to be snapped without a sharp pang: and when hereafter I

think, as often I surely shall do, of the fair banks of the Bosphorus,—the pleasant social walks that I have taken there, the lonely saunters, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies," and the delightful evenings which closed the careful day, will come upon my mind as one of the green spots "on memory's waste" that cheer the retrospect of a chequered life, when the fretting annoyances that sometimes ruffled the surface shall long have passed away.

## LETTER XII.

"AND how," you ask, "did I effect my retreat from this land of delay and disease, after bidding adieu to my kind entertainers and friends?" Why, by the only mode left me, since the steamer had ceased to ply between the mouth of the Danube and the Bosphorus,—namely, posting it with a Tatar, a method of progress which formed too strong a contrast to my late life of bodily comfort and repose to be particularly agreeable.

When on my last journey homeward from this place, I dismounted from my jaded Turkish nag, at the door of a little German inn at Belgrade, after a ride of seven hundred and fifty miles in six days, the last ninety-six of which within twelve hours, I said, while patting the animal's reeking neck, "Get thee gone, poor devil! and mayest thou be the last of thy

sort I shall ever bestride on such an errand!" Yet "who can control his fate!" Here was I, not quite two years after this fervent deprecation, engaging with another Tatar for nearly the same undertaking, and from the same starting-place; and, though not so imperatively bound to speed as on the former occasion, still influenced by sufficient motives to proceed without letting the grass grow under my feet.

Among these motives may be mentioned, first, a desire to make up for the long detentions I had suffered hitherto; and, secondly, a wish to pass as quickly as possible through a country known to be much infected with plague. Not a village on the south of the Balcan could be considered safe, and I purposed making a stout push from the first to cross them, entering on my way into as few dwellings as might be practicable in the state of the season and the weather.

This consideration of avoiding contagion had a great share also in guiding my choice as to a line of route. The great road by Adrianople was regarded as more dangerous in this

respect than other parts; and Adrianople itself had suffered severely, and was still suffering much from plague. So I preferred the road by Kiurk-Klissia and Bourgos, which would take me not only through a safer, but also through a new country, and enable me to see much of the shores of the Black Sea, and the regions bordering it from Bourgos Bay to Kustanjee.

At first it was my intention to have dispensed with that consequential and expensive appendage, a Tatar; and to trust to a servant who knew the Turkish and Bulgarian languages perfectly, to get me horses on the way. But considering that my route was rather a new and unfrequented one, where an official armed with authority might be useful, I resolved, by way of precaution, to take a Tatar; a measure which, in the sequel, I had abundant cause to rejoice at.

Accordingly, at a little after five P.M. of the 19th February, after dining with my excellent friend the consul-general, and discussing a bottle of his no less excellent Burgundy, I crossed the "Golden horn," and soon found

myself astride on the back of a Turkish poster, a class of the genus *équus* for which I profess to have more respect than liking.

"Once more upon the *Beggee*,* yet once more!
And the beast sinks beneath me like a jade
That dreads the work before it!"

Dark fell the evening as we trotted past the gloomy old walls of Stambol, and clattered over the causeway that traverses the great burying-ground. And so bitterly did the wind blow as we passed the barracks of Daood Pasha, that I was forced to don my sheep-skin coat in order to keep myself from being frozen with the cold.

The long, long fifty miles to Sillivria we completed by a quarter before four in the morning of the 20th; but the fierce wind had given me such a headache that, as we dismounted, I fell on the bench before the post-house door, and was thankful to have rather better than two hours' rest before the fresh horses were brought to carry us to Chorlee. The wind blew a hurricane during this stage of thirty-six miles, so that my headache increased; the

* *Beggee* is the Turkish name for their post-horses.

muscles of my legs and thighs, too, had become painful from the severe exertion after long disuse: so, as I was not riding for life or death, I resolved to remain here till the headache, or the wind, should cease, and I could proceed in greater comfort.

I took possession of a miserable empty hole attached to the post-house, which had no other recommendation than that of being free from all sort of furniture or matting that could retain or communicate infection. Wood is a non-conductor; so, getting the wretched floor swept free from dust, I threw upon it the hair-cloth sack which, being also a non-conductor, I took with me instead of a carpet to lie upon; and there, with a "Mackintosh" pillow under my head, I took up my quarters till about two in the morning of the 21st, when, the headache having taken its departure, and the tempest given place to a calm clear sky, we mounted, and rode merrily over the monotonous plain of Chorlee to Bourgos, distant eight hours, or thirty-two miles.

Here we left the great road, and struck across the country for eight hours more, to

Kiurk-Klissia, which we reached by four in the afternoon; but hearing that the next stage was a long one of fourteen hours, or fifty-six miles over very bad road and difficult country, which in the dark might be dangerous, I determined upon waiting here till midnight, when the moon should rise.

Kiurk-Klissia, as it is commonly called, and written in the maps, is supposed to take its name from the Turkish word *Kiurk*, forty, and Klissia (ecclesia) a church,—that is, the forty churches; and, while on the spot, I inquired whether there were any of the number, or their remains, still extant. But a respectable Greek inhabitant told me that it was all a mistake; that there never had been forty, or even one church of note here; and that the name in reality was not Kiurk-*Klissia*, but Kiurk-*Kinsee*, or the forty *nobodies*, which he said, had reference to some Turkish saying, or expression, the application of which I am ignorant.

It is a large town; I counted ten minarets of mosques; but it has been desolated by the

plague. I observed multitudes of fresh graves in every burying-ground, and understood that the mortality had been very great, particularly in the lower mehelehs, or divisions of the place: indeed, fresh graves were abundant wherever there was the appearance of population. I lodged in the house of a respectable Greek, where I dined on pillaw and the broth of a fine turkey, which my Tatar got for twelve piastres, or two shillings and sixpence (twice or thrice its real value,) and boiled to serve for provisions on the road.

Whether it was the turkey, or the previous day's journey, that acted as a soporific on the Tatar, I cannot say; but instead of starting, as proposed, at midnight, he did not get the horses ready till four in the morning of the 22nd. His excuse was the dreaded badness of the road, which turned out, as usual, to be no excuse at all. On the last part of the stage from Bourgos we had entered a region of brushwood, and passed through a fine valley full of old sycamores, walnuts, and various sorts of fruit-trees, with abundant vestiges

of former habitations, though all is now waste. There was little cultivation, and no people visible.

On leaving Kiurk-Klissia we commenced ascending a succession of low-spread hills, with rocky tops, until we attained a considerable altitude. Their sides, as we advanced, became covered with forests either of low and shrubby bushes or trees of tolerable growth, but few of great size; and through such country we travelled, sometimes at a smart gallop, and never very slowly, for better than fifty miles; when, descending into a deep valley, we popped down upon Faaki, a large Bulgarian village, situated in a sort of punch-bowl hollow, at half past two in the afternoon.

Here there were no horses to be had; a Russian officer having passed just before my arrival, on the way to Karnabat, had taken every animal that was in the post-house: so we were obliged perforce to remain here till others could be got. A lodging was assigned me in the house of one of the chiefs of the village; a very poor affair it was: but the people were obliging, and swept a place clean for

me by the fire, on which I stretched my hair mattress, and stowed my luggage.

A number of the villagers came flocking about the door, women as well as men, and, as they wore no veils, I had a full view of their faces, some of which were pretty enough. One, who was weaving a web before the door under a sort of verandah, had only been married a month, as they told me; she looked as if she had been so for several years. All the rest had distaffs in their hands, and a pretty and classical look enough, as they spun their flax, when you did not descend to a too particular examination.

The handkerchief with which they bind their heads, and which, gathered in a knot behind, floats gracefully down the back, gives them an air which the coarseness of the rest of their apparel cannot take away. They wear a profusion of necklaces and ornaments in silver, coral, &c. strung so as to lie upon and cover the throat and upper part of the breast; and the hair, escaping on each side behind the ears, is filled with coins and silver ornaments. The young girls stick also some flower, or a

sprig of myrtle, on one side of the head, which hangs down very gracefully. They wear armlets and rings of silver; and behind, from the hair on either side, depends a long string of silver or copper coins, which reaches almost as low as the knee: but the bosom is covered with a hideous thick coarse sort of jacket of brown or blue stuff, bound tight over it; and below this they wear a belt of leather, or embroidered stuff, like carpet, embracing the waist from the breast to the loins, from whence flows a petticoat, generally blue, with a flounce some twenty inches deep, of the same coloured and worked worsted fabric.

The worst part of their costume is a species of band which they wind round the ankles, and which gives them a swollen appearance, deforming what otherwise would often be a very pretty figure. There was one tall slender girl in particular, who, though her features were not regularly beautiful, had an arch and winning expression that was very pleasing; and who, with a spice of rustic coquetry, threw herself into the prettiest attitudes possible as she twirled her distaff and spun her thread.

As I sat sketching them as well as I could, —for it was like trying to catch the form of a flitting cloud,—I observed a little whispering going on among them apart; and then one came timidly forward, and threw a handkerchief either on my knee or arm, I forget which, and then retired to a little distance. Upon inquiring of my servant what the meaning of this manœuvre might be, he told me that it was a mode they had of soliciting from strangers a small present. Five or six of the women then stood up in a row, and, holding each other by the girdle, interlacing their arms in a peculiar way,* they commenced singing a song, to the music of which they moved, rather than danced, with a gentle sway from side to side, slowly, but in perfect time. There was little of grace or elegance in the performance; yet it was pleasing nevertheless. They sang, first in Turkish, and then in Bulgarian. Song the first was on rather a strange subject for ladies,—it was in praise of the wine-shops of Adrianople,—truly Anacreontic, no doubt; those of the other songs I did not

* See Frontispiece to this volume.

hear. When they had done, I wrapped a gold piece, called a yermilick, (20 piastres,) value about four shillings, in the handkerchief, and returned it to the donor, which I understood to be the customary manner of giving my present: on which, away they all ran off with it to see what it was; and great was the rejoicing at the sight of the gold, as the sum generally tendered by the natives does not exceed three or four piastres. They then went to the Tatar, and, after performing towards him the same ceremonies, they all returned to their several occupations.

I was informed that the plague had not come to Faaki, which is in what is called the Little Balcan; and, moreover, that none of the villages from hence to the shore of the Black Sea had been visited by it,—a blessed exemption if true. It had stopped, they asserted, at Kiurk-Klissia. I certainly saw but few fresh graves about the place.

When we all retired to rest at night, my host, in spite of my remonstrances, lighted a huge fire in the corner of the hut; and whether from the heat, or the tea I had taken

after dinner, I know not, but no sleep visited my eyes all night; so that it was without any reluctance that I complied with the Tatar's call to "mount and go" at one o'clock in the morning of the 23rd, by a fine cold frosty moonlight. We rode through forest, across the remaining part of the Little Balcan, for four Turkish hours; at the end of which we descended to a far lower level, at a miserable village named Karajolder. Here we exchanged the horses we had brought from Faaki, and which were only the *retour* ones from Karnabat, for fresh ones, which were to carry us to Bourgos. We had seen from the heights the sea gleaming in the moonlight, and imagined that, on our completing our descent, we should find ourselves upon its shore; but it turned out to be much more distant than we thought, for we rode for a weary six hours through low rising grounds of dwarf oak and brushwood, and skirted along a shallow lake, or back-water, which runs from the bay for from twelve to fifteen miles inland, and is bordered by extensive marshes.

At length we issued from the brushwood

upon a sandy beach which runs along the bay, separating it from large marshy tracts, and on which we rode to Bourgos. These marshy tracts, and lagoons, or back-waters, are formed by the *débouche* of streams which, running from the mountains, seek vent to the sea in various little bays and hollows on the coast. The strong surf which beats upon the beach throws up a bank of sand and gravel, and prevents the escape of the water, which, thus pent up, spreads over the low bottoms of the valleys behind, converting them into morasses or lakes; and these, accordingly, form a marking feature in the whole coasts of the Black Sea. It is the same with the southern banks of the Caspian Sea; and the scenery here occasionally reminded me of my travels along some parts of that fine lake.

The Bay or Gulf of Bourgos, which may be thirty miles in depth, is open to the eastward; and therefore, when the wind blows from that quarter, cannot be safe for shipping: but it has smaller bays and corners, which are secure at all times. Among these are Sizeboli and Atia; the former is at the south point of the

gulf, and would be open to the north wind but for a large island which lies before it in that quarter. Here the Russian squadron lay for more than six weeks during the invasion of Turkey in 1828-9; but I was told by an old fisherman that four of the large vessels lay in Atia, which is a larger and better bay, further in than that of Sizeboli, and open only to the north-north-west, from which quarter the wind can only blow across the head of the gulf, and consequently can raise no sea. The anchorage ground is also better for holding. I attempted to visit Sizeboli by rowing across the gulf, but the wind freshened so much that I could not make it out with the very rude and unsafe boats to be had here.

There being nothing to detain me at Bourgos, I got horses, and rode to the village of Ashellon, about twelve miles further on. It is built upon a point running out into the sea, and is inhabited by fishers. Our road to it lay for the most part along narrow spits of sand, separating the lagoons from the sea. On some of these lagoons are salt-works belonging to government. At Ashellon, after considerable

delay, we obtained a comfortable konak in the house of a Greek fisherman and merchant, who, to judge by the internal appearance of his dwelling, must have been a thriving trader. He offered me dinner if I required it; but having made a meal at Bourgos, on some of the good things put up for me by my friends at Constantinople, I contented myself with a cup of chocolate, in which my host participated with evident satisfaction. We were again assured that neither here nor at Bourgos, nor indeed in any village of the bay, had the plague made its appearance; and, although there had been regular and frequent communication with Kiurk-Klissia, no evil consequences had ensued from that intercourse. I saw few fresh graves, so that probably the information was correct.

At two in the morning of the 24th, we were on horseback; and a smart ride of about sixteen miles took us by five o'clock to Missewri, or Messembria, a very wretched ruinous village, situated, like Ashellon, upon a high rocky point. At this miserable hole neither horses nor a lodging were to be had; the former had all been taken for government service, so that

there was no chance of getting any; and, as a *pis-aller*, we made inquiry for a boat to take us to Varna. Fortunately, as we then thought, there was one just starting; and, having bargained to exclude all other passengers, we embarked ourselves, our luggage and riding-gear, on a small vessel called a *beche*, of about one thousand okes, or two thousand seven hundred pounds' burthen, and a crew of, I think, six men.

It was about half-past seven of a lovely morning that we started with a fair but scanty wind, which soon ceased to fill our two lateen sails; and then we took to rowing, by which we made but poor progress. The shore for a considerable way resembled much that which we had already passed; but as we approached the range of the Greater Balcan, or Mount Hæmus, which terminates in a fine bluff headland called Emina Bournou, (or cape,) the mountains abruptly descending to the sea caused the sandy beach to give way to a bold precipitous coast. Still there was little of magnificent, and less of cheerful scenery. The aspect of the country is sad; in colour one

unvarying brown, which wearies and disgusts the eye. The mountains are covered with low coppice-wood, and present scarred or rocky faces to the sea: but there are no grand cliffs, or imposing forms; and the beach, if such it can be termed, is formed of great fragments of rock fallen from above, which have all the appearance of being lashed with great violence when the wind blows on shore. Emina Bournou is the only exception to the uninteresting character of the coast. It is a fine bold headland; and near to it, upon a lofty cliff, stands a convent dedicated to St. Nicholas.

About sunset, the crew being wearied with rowing, we came-to at a spot about halfway to Varna, where it was resolved to wait the rising moon, and the breeze which was expected to spring up along with it. We remained accordingly; but, in place of the breeze, came a thick small rain, terminating in a heavy shower, which gave us a hearty wetting. At last the wind did come however, and away we went; but scarcely had we made five miles of distance, when it fell again, and the boatmen put into a sandy nook, to wait for morning,

and refresh themselves at a fire which they made on shore. Though the night was not the most agreeable, it was a fine picturesque Salvator-like scene that group rejoicing in the blaze of a huge bonfire kindled in an oak-wood, overhung with rocky heights, and with the dark waters heaving and dashing languidly beneath; and I have seen the day when I should have much enjoyed it. But increase of years make us more sensible to the loss of comfort and the disappointment of delay, and less eager to purchase the excitements of imagination at their expense. Strange how our feelings alter with advancing life, yet leave behind a savour of the past! I remember well with what keenness I enjoyed full many a wild expedition in the forests and savannahs of Guiana, and on the moon-lit seas of the Western Indies. I still recall with delight my long and various Indian travels, and the enthusiasm of interest which gave a charm to many a toilsome and dangerous night-march in Khorasan. Something of the same elation still remained on my second trip to that remote country, to lighten the toil of a Tatar

journey, and the discomforts of an Arab tent. —But now, can I say that I covet the same toils, or would again willingly expose myself to the same discomfort and risk?—I fear me, no: duty alone—imperative duty—would now start me afresh; and that with no good-will. Last night, as we rode along, the sun was casting his setting beams upon the brown rising ground and distant hills; near us was a waving tract of cultivated land, with a flock of sheep grazing on the stubble as they went slowly homewards, followed by a shepherd dressed in the skins of some slaughtered members of his flock:—the whole scene, with the village in the distance, recalled to me so strongly the evening of a march in Persia, as to raise a strange and mingled feeling which I scarcely could define. There was in it the vivid recollection of the past, when far away from home, yet high in hope and fixed in purpose, I pursued researches in foreign lands with a delight that is now gone by; and there was regret for those aspirations of the unbroken spirit, which like the dead, when once gone, return no more,—for the buoyancy of

youth for ever departed. For, though the scene had struck a chord of memory which vibrated through the heart, I felt that were the question put upon honour, "Would you willingly again undertake such journeys?" the answer would be, "No!—the time for hard labour is passed, I have had my share of it; and duties less arduous, with rest, and the recollection of what has been, are all to which I now aspire."

The night was cold, and the morning of the 25th was colder, and dull as lead. We started at sunrise, and rowed on till flaws of wind arose; which, after baffling us for some time, settled about noon into a steady and favourable breeze. Cape, cliff, and valley's mouth were slowly passed in succession, till at length the force of oar and sail brought us to the landing-place of Varna about three in the afternoon. I immediately sent the Tatar to see what could be done towards forwarding us at once, by providing us with post-horses; but in this he was not very successful. He found the pasha at the custom-house, who, on learning my arrival, insisted upon ordering me

a konak, and on my remaining to visit him in the morning. This was a most unwelcome attention, as it quite prevented my proceeding, as I wished to have done, in the evening; but there was no help for it. My friend, Rustum Bey, was not now here; he had gone to Bucharest; and so, having none to plead my cause, (for a Tatar will never remonstrate with a pasha) I was forced to retire quietly to my konak.

This was, as usual, in the house of a Greek, and very comfortable. The owner, a jolly stout man, made me welcome as it seemed, though in a rough way, to everything; and there was a queer little girl of six, not pretty, but yet a fine child, who kept creeping in and out like a little tame mouse, staring at me with its great black eyes with a pleasant familiarity, but never approaching me closely, which was quite as well; for neither in person nor in habits was it as cleanly as could have been wished. It seemed among other things to take great pleasure in picking off the dirty black grease that adhered to the snuffers and candlestick, and plastering it over its hands.

I thought how —— would have been horrified at the sight. After a frugal supper of rice and milk broth, pillaw and some milk, with two or three eggs, I took up a recumbent position, in the good man's bed; but, as they did not think of giving me clean sheets, I thought it as well not to put off my clothes. He seemed to be a careless sort of person for a Greek; for I found a purse with a good deal of money in the bed when I was preparing it, and afterwards another hoard beneath the pillow, all which he had thus abandoned to my mercy.

Next morning the 26th, I was up with the sun, in hopes that the pasha might issue from his harem, as he sometimes does, at an early hour. But there was no such luck for me; for, as if to plague me, he came forth rather later this day than usual. He was extremely civil; but nothing passed which might not have been made the subject of a courteous message, and I should have saved more than twelve hours by it. Breakfast—a few hard eggs and tea—being over, and the horses—miserable jades—being produced, we

started at eleven o'clock, and, ascending the heights that bound the valley of Varna on the north, found that we had only reached the natural level of the country, the soil of which was a fat black loam resting on a lighter subsoil, which again lay on limestone beds. There was a good deal of cultivation, and of dwarf oak forest.

While riding along, the Tatar, Allee Aga by name, broke his customary silence to ask me whether I had ever heard of sugar being made from beet-root? I replied that I had, and that it was manufactured to a considerable extent in France, but I believed was not highly esteemed. "I believe so indeed," replied he; "yet here is Sultan Mahmood setting to work to make it in Turkey. He has heard of the thing, and has given a man two thousand piastres a month (twenty pounds) to take charge of the manufacture; and they have already begun to sow the beet-root seed here, about Varna. Turks make sugar! *Mashallah!* He set them to make cloth, and pretty stuff they make; it will be the same with this sugar concern."

"Yes," replied I; "the Sultan is fond of

introducing European habits and improvements, and often makes the attempt without considering whether they are fitted for his subjects, or they for them; and this is one which they are not fit for. It might be better if he would encourage his rayahs to cultivate wheat and barley, and silk, and oil, and opium; he would increase their riches and his own too. But what is his practice. The government takes the Rayah's grain at a fixed low price, which the pashas and governors lower still more to secure a profit to themselves; or, to avoid this, the farmers are forced to bribe their rulers high, so that they are not paid for the labour of cultivating: how then can they have heart or spirit to cultivate the ground? no wonder it lies waste; for who would plant for another to gather? But, on the other hand, let the Sultan give his rayahs free liberty to seek their own market, — to sell to French, English, Italians, or any who may require their produce, and who would bring them as much cloth, and sugar, and other things, as were required, in return; and see how fast cultivation will increase. That is the way for

him to make cloth and sugar. Every man would then become rich, and well able to pay customs and taxes, so that the treasury of the Sultan would soon be filled. You heard what the man said at Bourgos: the grain of eight districts is brought there to the government stores at a fixed price, for exportation to the capital; and thus it is in other quarters."

"Hah!" replied Allee Aga, with a grim smile, "all you have said is true; but," patting his forehead very significantly, "he has not got it here, — it is not here!" In the course of some further talk about the monopolies and prohibitions which are the bane of agriculture and commerce in Turkey, and which my friend, Allee Aga, seemed quite to understand the mischief of, I told him the story of the boy and the goose which laid a golden egg a day, as illustrative of the effects of the false policy which we were conversing about. The Tatar seized the application with great readiness, and exclaimed with much earnestness, "Aha! you have said it; Sultan Mahmood kills the bird, and loses both it and its eggs."

It is very interesting to learn the feelings of the people among whom you travel. When occasion offers,—and it is always worth while attempting to instill into their minds a few such obvious truths, — it is of service, for it spreads; and, though its effect may not extend to high quarters, it tends to open the eyes of the working classes to their own interests, and will gradually work for good.

Five hours' riding took us to Baltjuk, twenty-four miles distant from Varna: a strange and sorry place it was, lying among a parcel of earthy cliffs above a bay looking south-south-east, surrounded with a multitude of tombs in old burying grounds, but little of anything to cheer the living. Here we were forced to wait three hours for horses, during which we were entertained with an excellent dinner by a very gentlemanly young Turk, who had been one of the Sultan's body-servants. Thus it was seven in the evening before we mounted; and we had not proceeded more than three or four hours, when the load-horse having fallen three times, and being

quite unable to go on, we halted at a small knot of houses to get another.

This was one of several clusters very widely scattered, which formed a kind of village, and consisted of from half-a-dozen to a dozen of low thatched huts, standing, as if dropped by accident, in the deep mud of the surrounding country. That which we entered was full of strange-looking creatures all stretched in sleep upon the floor; and we added to their number for full four hours, during which we were detained, first for a horse, and then by a heavy fall of rain. We then mounted, and rode towards Mangalia, a village further on upon the banks of the sea.

Our route lay across undulating downs of fat black earth, and of the most uninteresting character possible. Every foot of land, it is true, was capable of producing abundantly; and we saw many patches of cultivation, with groups of houses scattered at random upon the surface. But all was dreary grey or brownish yellow, for there was scarcely a tree to be seen; and the face of the country reminded me of some of the worst of our endless

tracts of grey moss in the highlands of Scotland, although, in reality, there is no similarity of soil between the two. We reached Mangalia about nine on the morning of the 27th. This place, which in ancient times was a port of some consequence, (according to D'Anville,) is now a very wretched village, consisting of a few Bulgarian huts, with some families of Turks in the employment of government. It stands on the shore of the sea, close to a lagoon formed by a stream which here has its debouch; and we rode over a stone causeway, which crosses the lagoon, to get at it.

This route is so little frequented that we could scarcely hope to find a sufficiency of horses in the post-houses; and here we were forced to take a cart for the baggage and another for ourselves, instead of riding-horses, and for these we had to wait three hours: it was our first change from the usual posting system. As I took my seat in the baggage cart, a miserable concern drawn by two most sorry beasts, I could not help anticipating a tumble; while the charioteer, sensible of the

fragility of his turn-out, proceeded but slowly: yet all could not prevent my attention from being attracted to the singular country through which we were travelling. Not a tree, not a house, not an object, reared itself in any quarter above the surface of the ground, which rising and falling in a succession of endless downs, like the waves of a lazy sea, confined our horizon for the most part to a very small range. The only things that redeemed the scene from utter lifelessness, was an occasional flock of sheep with their shepherd,—a strange figure, clad in skins with the wool outside, looking just like a great ram reared upon end, or lying down among his flock undistinguishable almost from the creatures that composed it. Our Surajee, or guide, was a Cossack thus clad; but he turned the leather side of his cloak out, and looked rather the wilder for it. In fact, we were now approaching the confines of a district inhabited almost entirely by Tartars of the Nogai race, and which is known by the name of Dobrudska Tartary. There seems reason to suppose that these Tartars have existed here a long time, for the district they in-

habit was formed into a particular province by Constantine; and its capital, Tomi, the scene of Ovid's banishment, is now called Baba or Baba Dagh. These people are, at this day, as uncouth as it is possible to imagine in their habits and appearance; so that, although actually in Europe, and little more than a hundred miles from civilized creatures, we might, so far as regards what was immediately around us, have been travelling in the steppes of Tartary, or in the Desert of the Toorkomans.

Their country is principally pasture, and they employ themselves more in breeding horses and cattle, and feeding sheep, than in agriculture; although about Baba Dagh, the residence of their chief, there is, I believe, a good deal of corn cultivated. At this season the country wears a peculiarly bleak and dreary aspect, from the total absence of vegetation, and the rare occurrence of either human beings or habitations. Yet in the midst of these wastes it was striking to observe many ancient burying-grounds, with their stones all grey or green from the effects of

time, telling of by-gone generations where now not an abode of man is to be found. These mementoes of the transitory nature of all human things meet our eye wherever we go.

We had made about four hours' progress, and had reached a village upon a lagoon, called, I think, Toozkewy, from a salt-work with which it is connected, when our charioteer and guide both became anxious to come-to, instead of proceeding on to Kustanjee, where, they said, we should arrive too late to get quarters. The Tatar leant to the same arrangement; to which I acceded, not for the reasons they gave, but because I was desirous to see and examine the country between this place and Kustanjee by daylight. Accordingly, we alighted at the house of an honest Turk, who gave us what he had with good-will, and whose public room, or *Selâmlik*, served to lodge *Tchelebee*, Tatar, Surajee, and all; but it was clean and comfortable, and he gave us some very eatable things to dinner.

At half-past three on the next morning (the 28th) we started for Kustanjee; but made a bad set-out, breaking down before we

were a mile from the village. I tumbled out without being hurt; and taking one of the horses, while my servant took the other, we left the Tatar to bring on the broken cart, and set off by ourselves for Kustanjee, which was in sight upon a point at about twelve miles' distance. Crossing the lagoon by a narrow bank of sand, we came to waving downs again, and proceeded along the summit of an earthy cliff varying from fifty to a hundred feet in height above the sea. On approaching the place, we observed on its south side the remains of what appeared to have been ancient fortifications, consisting first of two ditches, and a green mound between them like a wall. A number of square blocks of stone, which turned out to be white marble, were scattered about upon the edge of the outer ditch. At first I imagined they belonged to a burying-ground; but such was not the fact. Beyond this there was much broken ground, which might have once been part of the works, and numerous blocks of marble were lying about. In a ravine, which divided the cliff above the sea, there were several remains of ancient

buildings, as well as in a deep ditch which led into it. Capitals, and other pieces of columns, were lying in and about both.

Over this ditch we passed through what had obviously been a gateway, from the blocks of stone level with the ground, yet holding firmly together, and the pieces of pavement still sound, and of excellent construction. The direction of some streets might also be traced from this point. On entering what had been the modern town of Kustanjee, we saw abundance of marble blocks, Corinthian capitals, and bits of shafts strewed around, or built into the walls of huts. Marble fountains were stuck in the ground, like huge mortars, and were used to pound things in; and ornamental pieces of carved work stared out from the rugged sides of the modern houses. Among such objects we made our way for some distance, passing a long low building, which had formed the Russian hospital in the last war against Turkey, now abandoned to ruin; and went on to our *konak* in the governor's house, where we obtained a decent apartment.

You may, perhaps, be disposed to ask what

was, and what is, this same place of Kustanjee, to which I have now introduced you? I fear I am not antiquary, or, perhaps, historian enough, to give you a very satisfactory reply to this natural question. It, no doubt, was a Roman town of some consideration in the time of the Emperor Trajan, for the remains of a wall are extant which he built from the river Danube to the sea, at this place, in order to repress the incursions of the Northern barbarians. Of this wall I will speak more anon. The name of the town, at that time, I know not; but that it received the appellation of Constantiana, from Constantine, and was a maritime city of considerable importance in his time, we learn from D'Anville, who identifies Constantiana in the Turkish appellation of Kustanjee.

That it was a place of no small importance, probably a favourite residence of some provincial governor, is also rendered likely from the remains still to be traced of solid and ornamental buildings, and the quantity of marble still lying scattered about, even after the removal of vast quantities to other places, all of

which must have been brought from a distance. That it was a place of commerce, is clear, from the remains of two large moles, forming a safe and considerable harbour, which are still visible, and even useful to ships at the present day; and the vestiges of former cultivation and population in the vicinity of the walls, announce that it was probably the centre of a well-inhabited district.

While waiting for the Tatar's arrival, I went out to look at the place, and the following was the result of my observations:—The town appears originally to have occupied the whole of a promontory which projects into the sea, and which consists of earth resting on a bed of yellow shelly limestone rock, which crops out almost level with the waters of the sea, and is the only rock I observed in the vicinity. The extent of this promontory is considerable, but I had no means of estimating its superficial contents; probably, the length, from what I considered the gate of the ancient city to the furthest point projecting into the sea, might be three-quarters of a mile. The whole circuit presents a scarped face, and has, at one

time, been surrounded by a very substantial wall of stone and lime. This is now entirely demolished, but both the crown of the scarp, and the slope itself, are covered with blocks of stone; and an immense quantity of the same *débris* lies at its foot, and in the water all around. Marble, as I have said, abounds everywhere; shafts, pedestals, and head-ornaments of columns, basins, cornices, and fragments of friezes, were met with at every step. In some places were considerable remains of building, evidently very ancient and extremely solid; and I thought I could trace out the sites of several temples on the elevated points of the promontory.

At the southernmost point, where the rock comes above the surface of the sea, is seen the remains of the ancient stone jetty, running out perhaps a hundred and fifty yards. It must have been very strong; and even now, though for the most part level with the water, serves to keep off the violence of the swell. The breakers, observed in the same direction to a still greater distance, indicated a further addition to the length of the mole, which, by

the people of the country, is attributed to the Genoese. Opposite, from a point on the mainland west of this mole, may be seen the remains of another pier or quay, which ran out to meet that at the south point, and which thus formed a moderately-sized but secure harbour. But the most astonishing thing was the enormous quantity of squared and other masses of stone, which formed, as it were, a beach to the scarp of the cliff. The old Turk who went with us to show the lions, assured me that enough of these stones had been removed to Issakchee, Toolchee, Ibrailoff, Sillistria, and other places, to build a dozen cities. "Never," said he, "had there been seen so many ready-made stones collected together in the world!" and certainly there appeared to be enough remaining to construct a good solid wall and city, where they had been already used for that purpose: yet the greater part, if not the whole, of these stones must have been brought from a great distance.

Nothing can be more complete than the ruin of the place as it now stood. The Turks had probably demolished it pretty completely

at first, but they had erected fortifications in their own fashion; and the Russians, when they invaded Turkey in 1828, found it strong enough to arrest their progress for some time. It was much shattered in the siege and capture by them; and after the peace of Adrianople, when they evacuated the place and the country, they put the finishing stroke to it by razing the walls so completely, that scarcely one stone remains upon another. The few remaining buildings are in utter decay, and there are not more than from twenty to thirty Turkish families inhabiting the place.

When Kustanjee fell, the Russians fixed their head-quarters there, and formed their first military line across the country from this point to the Danube, a distance of from thirty to forty miles, in the very course of Trajan's wall; having a camp at Karasu, about half-way, and another at Tchernevoda on the Danube. They occupied this position for thirty months, during which, of course, the country was scoured on every side, and every relic of antiquity that could be found was secured. I was assured that the quantity of

curious marbles, columns, ornaments, and, I suspect, even statues, which they sent away in their vessels, was incredible. Indeed, they left nothing worth removing behind.

After breakfast I rode out to look at the environs of the town, and to examine the vestiges of Trajan's wall. From a height to the north-west I could discern many cuts like canals, all nearly filled up; and the face of the country was covered with tumuli, and irregular heights, in all directions. The wall or line of Trajan is the same which had struck me as resembling an ancient work, when I entered the place. It consists of two ditches, having a high mound between them, with a smaller one on the outside of each, like a small glacis; and the profile or section of the work might occupy a space of one hundred and ten to one hundred and twelve yards. The outer wall or mound, where I saw it at first, might be ten feet in height from the ditch to its summit; and all was covered with smooth green turf.

This wall, at a short distance from the precincts of the town, branches into two, with its corresponding ditches; and each branch ter-

minates in a ravine, in the cliff that overhangs the sea. Beyond the point of division the line may be traced, running nearly straight in a western direction over height and hollow; and I found afterwards it was traceable in this manner all the way to the Danube. There is reason to suppose, from the quantity of blocks discovered, that part at least of these ditches and the wall had been revetted with stone; and the effect of rains washing the earth away, had given to view some buildings and chambers that must have been in the ditch itself. Below, near the sea, there was a building evidently antique, with fragments of marble basins and small domes.

The tradition of the Turks and natives of the place, respecting these vestiges of walls and ditches, is curious. They attribute the formation of them, not to the purpose of defence, but to that of bringing a branch of the Danube to the Black Sea at this place, I believe, with the view of supplying it with good water. They say, that when the work was nearly completed, by the orders of the Genoese chief or governor, (they called him *king*,) who

resided at the place, he went to see its progress, and seeing the chief engineer hurrying along in the ditch, he asked him when the water was to make its appearance. "It is now coming after me like a dog," exclaimed the engineer, who appeared desirous to get out of its way. But the water, affronted at being thus reproachfully spoken of, stopped short, then retreated, and never afterwards could be persuaded to advance again.

Having seen all that a cursory view could show us of Kustanjee, we got one cart and two horses as before, and two riding-nags, and took our way across the country towards the Danube, in the very line of Trajan's wall, by Karasu. Our way lay across waving downs of from fifty to one hundred feet above the level of the sea, and long low valleys separating them, till on our left appeared a deeper hollow, in which, as I was informed, ran the water of Karasu; and after a course of about five Turkish hours, or twenty miles, about sunset we reached a few wretched huts rejoicing in the appellation of Kewy Settlee, or the village of Settlee, where we got a better

lodging than was to have been expected from appearances, and came-to for the night. It is not far from a reedy pool or lake, one of many which are found in the course of the Karasu stream, and which give shelter to myriads of wild geese and ducks. Of these, and bustards, with partridges, and several other sorts of game, a skilful sportsman might get any given quantity; the most material part of our dinner, and an excellent one it proved, consisted of wild goose, dressed in more than one fashion.

Being desirous of seeing the features of the country, I did not start till broad day-light; when, after leaving the village a short way, I turned to the bed of the Karasu, to examine the remains of an old bridge which at one time crossed the stream. There was, however, no remains of building visible above ground or water; only loose stones, and causeway enough to show that a considerable work had once existed on the spot. We were informed that a prodigious quantity of stones had been removed from hence to various places. On a rising ground, about three hundred feet high above

the left bank of the stream, the appearances of walls and ruins were discernible, and I was informed that these were the remains of an ancient city. I would fain have examined it; but the distance was considerable, and the horse I rode so miserable, that I doubted much his ability to carry me half the stage. Time also pressed, so that I was forced to content myself with viewing these relics through my spying-glass. No doubt these are the remains of some ancient Roman city connected with this military *cordon* of Trajan, whose wall traverses its site, and was seen stretching over all the heights in the line towards the Danube.

Continuing our way across a weary succession of these downs, which somewhat increased in height, we at length entered a long winding valley, which brought us down upon that of the Karasu, near its *débouche* on the Danube, and at a small straggling village which is called Boghâz Kewy, (the village of the Mouth or *Débouche,*) or Tchernovoda: happy as I had been to leave that fine river, I did not think I should rejoice so much at

once more getting sight of its waters. My miserable brute of a horse came down like an empty sack just as I was trying to trot him into the village, and, in attempting to recover itself, rolled over on my left leg. I thought it was all over with me; but after a few struggles he lay still, until my servant came up and got him lifted a little, so as to set me free.

At this village we got breakfast and fresh horses, which, however, were only to carry us about four miles on, to Yenikewy, a Bulgarian village on another stream. While we were waiting for them, there came in to see us, among other persons, an old Turk named Osman Aga, who, I was assured, was one hundred and twenty years old; a fact which was proved by the number of Sultans he had known on the throne of Constantinople. He had seen Othman, I think, and all the others to Sultan Mahmood, inclusive; three of them had been murdered; two died a natural death; the present waits his fate,—and who shall prophesy what that may be?

Osman Aga has enjoyed such astonishing health, as never, till quite lately, to have felt

the infirmities of age. He yet could mount his horse without aid of his hands, and could ride it from Tchernovoda to Kustanjee, forty miles good, within the day. It is only this year he has found it inconvenient to go a-hunting; by which symptom, he says, he begins to know that he is growing old. All his faculties, except that of hearing, were quite perfect.

In our way to Yenikewy we passed through Trajan's wall, which meets the Danube at this point. It was on very high ground, and we could trace it for a long way back crossing the hills. It was here full twelve feet high from the ditch, which was filled up with frozen snow, but was far more perfect than at Kustanjee; the formation of the work, so far as could be distinguished, was the same as at that place.

Yenikewy was a small but thriving Bulgarian village: all the houses were neatly painted on the outside with yellow clay, and well thatched with reeds; and the one we entered was as clean within as the nicest English cottage, the bedding and household articles dis-

posed of in the most orderly way upon the matted benches or divans around the walls. But we had a sad fight for horses, and the Tatar was forced to use a little gentle violence in shape of some touches of his whip,—a most efficient means,—before the animals were produced; although they were only to carry us to Rassova, distant six miles. In fact, so difficult did it prove to get on by land,—the post establishment not reaching to these remote districts,—that we tried hard, though ineffectually, to hire a boat to take us up to Sillistria.

To Rassova at length we proceeded, and reached it at five in the evening, crossing one or two lagoons on our way, much such as those upon the sea-coast; with this difference, that the space dividing them from the river's bank is not sand or gravel, but clay or deep loam, through which the stream forming the lagoon cuts its way in a tolerably deep channel. Rassova proved to be a large and thriving Bulgarian village, built on the face of a hill overlooking the Danube, and opposite the low country of Walachia. The cleanness and trig appearance of the outside of its huts pro-

mised well for our quarters within; nor were we disappointed: its chief, a jolly Bulgarian farmer, with a good-humoured laugh worthy of an English Boniface, received us at once into his house, and gave us a very tidy, decent room, with coarse but comfortable fare. The whole *ménage* might have served as a model of cleanliness.

These people are only now recovering from the effects of the war between Turkey and Russia, in which they were about equally pillaged by both parties; most perhaps, they said, by the Turks: but the Russians, when they quitted the country, carried off all they could lay hands upon; so that the inhabitants, after losing all their stock of goods and cattle, are now beginning the world again. The whole country from Boghâz Kewy to Rassova was one scene of ruined gardens and vineyards, and corn-fields gone to waste; nor has cultivation as yet made any great progress towards recovery.

Our host declared the road to be so bad that he would not suffer us to proceed till daylight. There was a mill too, the miller

of which had a reputation not much better than the road; and the night was not the best season to pass it in safety. He proved to be right as to the road. We could scarcely have passed the stream that turned this mill, by night and unaided; for it required the help of a good many peasants, who were standing there with their carts as we passed, to enable us to cross it in the morning. As to the justice of our host's insinuations against the miller's character, we could say nothing; that functionary not having shown himself, or in any way interfered while near his premises. The mill itself is on the outlet of another large lagoon, which we saw running far into the country.

From the hollow of this lagoon we rose, and crossed a considerable range of heights; and proceeding for sixteen miles through a country, at present waste, but all bearing marks of former cultivation, reached Beylic, another Bulgarian village, as neat as the rest, where, until horses were brought, I was shown into a comfortable apartment. But, in sitting down upon a sort of divan, I almost *spoiled*

a pair of twin innocents, who lay huddled among a parcel of rags, on the very place where I was going to dispose of my person.

The Tatar, who for several days had been complaining of a severe headache, was here so ill that he could scarcely sit his horse, and could by no means make the customary fight for a change of steeds: we were consequently detained here three hours for them, during which time I amused myself by witnessing two curious scenes of strife. One was between two turkey-cocks, of which bird there are vast numbers kept in some of these villages. I had never seen such a combat before, and it was indescribably ludicrous. The tactics of the combatants seemed to consist in seizing each other by the gills or snout, and parading about solemnly, and with little appearance of violence, like a gentleman handing a lady in a party; but occasionally some kicks were interchanged, which, if the sound among their feathers might be trusted, smacked rather more of discourtesy and good earnest than was to be augured from the sobriety of the preliminary encounter. The fray, however, was

not permitted to come to extremities; for a matron,—the owner, I suppose,—rushing out from a neighbouring bothy, pounced upon the combatants, and, whisking one of them up under her arm, bestowed a hearty kick upon the other, and thus terminated the battle.

The other was a dispute of a different sort. Just as the horses were ready, and we were about to mount, a tall middle-aged, but still rather good-looking woman, came forward, and addressed the party with much vivacity, and, kindling as she spoke, began evidently to slide from remonstrance into abuse; yet there was a touch of pride and haughtiness in her bearing that prevented the appearance of vulgarity.

I understood that two or three of the horses furnished to us were hers, taken by authority or force, and that she was abusing the Tatar and village chief, who had been the authors of this oppressive act. The contrast between her violence, and the imperturbable indifference of Allee Aga, who smoked his pipe, and gave his orders without paying the least attention to the storm that was whistling about

his ears, was truly admirable. As for the lady, even after I had assured her that payment was to be made for the hire of her steeds, she was by no means satisfied. She continued to pour upon us a stream of mingled scorn and abuse in a fashion which would not have disgraced a Margaret of Anjou; nor did she cease till, having mounted, we took ourselves off beyond reach of her vocal artillery.

Notwithstanding that two of our horses were mares heavy in foal, we traversed with considerable rapidity a long extent of dreary country, exposed to a most disagreeable mist and rain, which drove right in our faces; and, passing another lagoon, reached the most miserable village of Khanlick, a considerable time after dark, cold, wet, and weary. It was by far the worst resting-place we had seen, and we fared accordingly, although we took up our abode in the chief's house. A sorry chief he was, Heaven knows! His house could boast of but one room for his family and guests; and when we came to examine into the matter of *provant*, it was found that his

stock consisted of just nothing at all. After a good deal of parley, the long, lean, dirty wife betook herself to kneading dough, part of which, when well tumbled about, she sliced into small pieces, and set to boil with some milk and water. This she was pleased to call *chorba*, or *soup*. I need not say, that it tasted only of the two last-mentioned ingredients. The rest of the dough she worked up, and fried with butter, into the semblance of a dish called côtlemah, made by my old friends the Toorkomans; and these two dishes, seasoned with some pickled cabbage of the country, formed our dinner: I eked it out with a dish of tea.

All this cookery had heated the small room so much, and filled it so completely with the fumes of fried butter, in addition to those proceeding from mine host, his wife and children, the Tatar, my servant, and some guides, that to sleep was impossible. The floor was literally covered with human beings,—the air suffocating. I rose more than once to open the door, which some kind friend took the earliest opportunity of shutting. So, after some hours of torture, in which my companions by no

means appeared to participate, I took up my own hair-cloth bag and air pillow, and fairly went forth and laid it down in the next room, at a hazard. It turned out to be the cow-house and stable, and therefore not the nicest place possible under foot; but so much preferable was its atmosphere, and the effluvia of the quadrupeds to that of the bipeds, that I soon fell into a comfortable nap, and slept till morning.

In the morning (of the 3rd of March) we found we had to fight the usual battle for conveyances, and this time with very indifferent success. There was not, they assured us, a horse to be had; the only manner in which they could accommodate us with the means of locomotion, was by furnishing us with two carts drawn each by four bullocks! and with these, spite of grumbling and threatening, we were forced to put up. But this was not the only disappointment we were doomed to meet at Khanlick. We learned here, that the bridge over a stream at some distance having been carried away, we should be forced to make a circuit of some twelve to twenty miles

to get round the lagoon from where it issues. This to persons who hoped to reach Sillistria, and cross the Danube to the quarantine station, before sun-down, was pretty provoking; but there was no help for it: so, the bullock-carts being produced, we got into them and drove away.

I wish you could have seen the face of Allee Aga as he first looked at, and then insinuated his short dumpy frame into, the rickety conveyance he was perforce to trust to. Not a word did he utter, but the expression even of his impassive face said, as plainly as words could say, "Heaven preserve me! is it come to this? Allah send me free of this savage country, where no *Beggees* are to be had, and Tatars are forced to bundle into a bullock-cart!".

The bullock-carts carried us, nevertheless, very fairly across some pretty hills; after which we came down upon a really noble lake, along the side of which we passed to a cluster of hovels, called Geurlitza,—one stage. We had thought Khanlick a miserable place; but what was it in point of wretchedness to Geurlitza?

The best house in it would hardly admit us, and could not produce the means of warming up a half-boiled fowl for breakfast. But our anxiety was rather for our future progress than our present comfort. A fine village which appeared on the hill face above the lake, just opposite, was, we were told, only three hours distant from Sillistria, and not one hour of distance from us as we looked at it from Geurlitza; whereas it would take us five to go round, and not a horse to carry us! This information set Allee Aga's wits to work; he went to the side of the lake, and finding a small punt there, capable as it seemed, with care, of carrying four persons in perfectly calm water, he persuaded the people to try and ferry us over the lake.

I was too anxious for proceeding to make any difficulties, and accordingly half of our baggage being placed in the frail bark, which was manned by a man and a boy, the Tatar and myself got in, leaving my servant to come with the rest of the luggage next trip. But no sooner had I embarked than a qualm came over me, and I half repented my rashness. No canoe

was ever so ticklish or unsteady; and its gunwale was so near the water, that the little tiny waves which were raised by a sweet air came lapping in over it; and they seemed to take a malicious pleasure in increasing in size as we advanced towards the centre, where, had we upset, our fate was inevitable, for I had my cloak, Tatar boots, and stockings on; and as for the Tatar, he was armed cap-a-pie, having, in addition to his usual gear, stuck his heavy pistols in his belt, so that he must have gone down like a stone. He was in a terrible fright, pale as a ghost; and he often pointed to his heart to signify how it was thumping, as he ejaculated, "Alla Kereem!—God is merciful!" As for me, I began seriously to cast about for the means of escape in case of accident. To get off either cloak or boots was impossible; but I blew up my air-pillow as a life preserver, to use should we be overturned. The least increase of wind would have done the business, and more than once it did threaten to blow harder: but Providence was kind; and by dint of taking the lee side of a bank of reeds, and gallantly stemming the open sea

which we could not avoid, we reached a little opening in another reedy bank, and, diving through it, found ourselves, as if by magic, at the other side.

Once more on shore, the Tatar's colour and courage returned, and the first use he made of it was to press a horse and cart which were upon their own business close by, to carry our baggage up to the village. The boat in the mean time returned for the servant, who made his appearance safe and sound in little more than an hour. By twelve o'clock of the day we were all ready for a start; but our host, though good-humoured, was slow, and it was considerably past one o'clock before the two carts required for ourselves and our baggage could be mustered.

Not slow, however, were the little ponies which at length he furnished. Full of mud and mire as were the roads, on they dashed. By three o'clock we passed the large village of Addakewy, and saw the fortress of Sillistria right a-head, and the village and quarantine station of Calarasse on the Walachian side of the river. A short while brought us to Sil-

listria itself, so celebrated in the late Russian campaigns, which is situated on a flat tract upon the river-bank; but I had no time either to examine or to enter it, as I was anxious to get into the quarantine that night, in order to save a day. Indeed, it had already been examined by far abler eyes than mine. It was plain, however, even from the most cursory view, as we rode along the glacis, that the place, so far from being in complete repair, had been greatly neglected; and the embrasures of the walls and bastions were scarcely one half of them armed with cannon, while even those left were unserviceable iron guns, not worth carrying away.

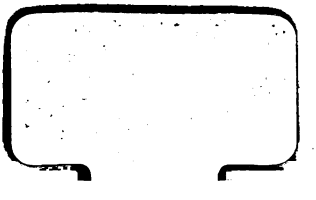
Driving at once to the shipping-place on the river-bank beyond the walls, we hired a caik to take us to Calarasse; but the foolish affectation of business-like precision on the part of the Turkish custom-master delayed us so much that it was past five in the evening ere we got clear. We rowed hard, and fast enough we went with oars and stream; yet the last beams of the sun had disappeared while we were yet in the creek that leads to Calarasse.

At length we reached the landing-place; and my fears were so far quieted, by finding no objection made to receiving us, though after sunset. Instantly jumping on shore, and getting our baggage hoisted on the boatmen's shoulders, we marched straight to the enclosure, which was to be my prison for the next twenty days. In ten minutes more, that is, by a short while after six, we were within its walls. Oh, how I rejoiced!—there was rest for me, at length.

On applying to the director, I found letters for me. I was expected, and the best quarters which the place afforded had been prepared for me; they consisted of two small rooms with a stove in each, and a raised platform on one side, projecting half the breadth of the apartment: one of these was for my servant, the other (the interior one) for myself; both were clean and well-built, though coarsely finished. Here, after asking me what I would have for dinner, the director left me to make my own arrangements; a guardian was appointed, and I was duly locked up. Next day completed the examination of my effects; the

following one, the purification of my person; and I was then left to amuse myself as best I might. But I do not purpose inflicting on you the tediousness of a twenty-one days' quarantine. My time did not pass heavily, for I had plenty of employment in writing, and making a series of drawings of the Bosphorus and of Constantinople, which you shall one day see. In due time I was released, and rejoined those of my party from whom I had so long been separated: anxiety and repeated disappointment had borne hard on them; but in other respects no home could have afforded them more of tenderness and comfort—no relatives could have watched over them with more solicitude than the kind consul and his most amiable sister. A five months' sojourn is a serious intrusion on any family, but the frank kindness of their hosts soon made them feel as members of that which they had so unexpectedly joined; and when, at length, the day of departure came, I scarcely think that the parting of the nearest relatives could have been more trying to all. It was alleviated, however, by the hopes of a pleasant meeting

in a better land; in which I, too, hope soon, dear, to join you in health and happiness, and to talk over all these matters more at large, in the comfort of our own well-beloved home!

THE END.

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